



messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 33 – Number 3

July 2015

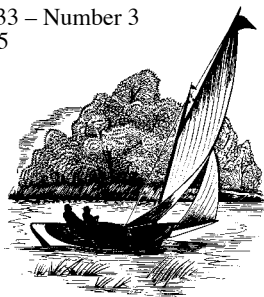
Special Features This Issue
Cedar Key Small Boat Meet – The 2015 Florida 120
Improvisational Boating – Hermit Crabbing – *The Day Off*
Canoeing with Boy Scouts – 1848 Collision at Sea



messing about in BOATS

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Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor

The annual early May gathering of small craft at Florida's Cedar Key has come and gone again, bigger than ever, we understand. Is it growing to an unmanageable size for its free form unorganized format, in which one just shows up, launches and sails? No telling yet, but sometimes this sort of thing does get too popular (anyone recall Woodstock?). Whatever its future prospects, this year it attracted an enormous range of small boats and, due to the efforts of several dedicated photographers, we can bring you a gallery of them in this issue (pages 8-10).

The original gallery is one put up on the internet by Ron Hoddinott of the Florida West Coast Trailer Sailors, all in "living color." It would be nice if we could replicate that but as it is not financially feasible our resort to black and white can introduce those of you unfamiliar with Ron's gallery to what was to be seen there. An internet link is included with our coverage for those of you so inclined (or able) to view the entire original gallery in color.

Immediately following the Cedar Key photo spread is another from Ron (pages 11-12) showing us the sort of boats that participated in the Florida 120, apparently a laid back cruise by members of that Trailer Sailor group. Both this and the Cedar Key coverage came to us from Dave Lucas of the Tiki Hut. Dave stays right on top of what's happening on the Florida west coast. In this event I had rather thought I'd find mostly production fiberglass trailer boats but found a significant number of home built designs were taking part.

So how many small boat photos can I look at year after year before the yawning starts? I dunno yet as it hasn't gotten at all boring after 32 years. Something about these boats is endearing to me, as it must be to most of you or you'd not be reading *MAIB*. I do still occasionally feel a tug towards getting more hands on with some, like the Rangeley Lake Boat I once had, the recollection of which sits at the top of my pile of memories of bygone boats that have passed through my life.

Despite initially getting fired up about building a Swampscott Dory which appeared

in one of John Gardner's bygone columns in *National Fisherman* back in the mid '70s and subsequently actually building a 10' lapstrake skiff at a two week course in a Maine barn in 1978, I never did build a serious boat, just my own 10' lightweight kayak, two actually, one of which still survives in the boat shed here. When I see the latest round of small boat photos that come to us I am reminded once again that I did indeed miss out on the experience many of you indulge in, building my own boat. The thought still has allure but my rational self quickly disabuses me of pursuing the idea. Turning out *MAIB* every month takes enough attention and effort to discourage undertaking a parallel small boat project.

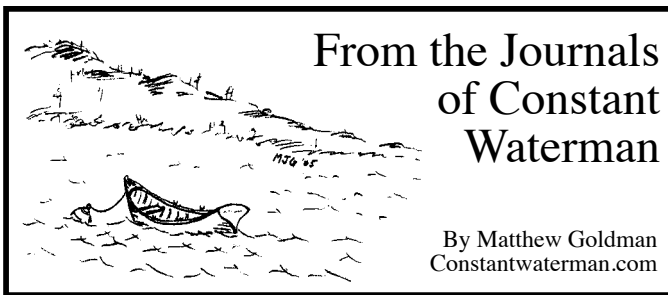
Looking at the photos of the variety of craft that many of you build and often take to such events as Cedar Key is engrossing, there are so many different approaches to getting afloat in one's own boat, unlike looking at fleets of one designs racing. I go back far enough to recall how as youths we eagerly awaited the annual introduction of Detroit's new automobile models, they all were clearly different from one another in design features and styling, each make easily recognized by its distinctive radiator grille, unlike today's cars which all seem to look alike to me.

The internet has certainly made it possible for anyone enchanted by small boats to look at hundreds (thousands?) of photos. Besides the individual websites (blogs?) to be viewed there are the many small builders who today advertise their craft on their own websites. These can provide a wealth of detail (even including action videos) impossible to present in a print ad. So one might ask, why bother with the sort of print ads we carry from loyal advertisers? Well, if you don't happen to know the name of some builder you will not know about his website and all it might offer unless you happen across it in a magazine story or ad.

So I encourage those of you so inclined to follow up on some boat(s) you get to see and read about on our pages by looking them up on the internet. The day is coming when it will just about entirely replace print publications, but not just yet!

On the Cover...

Setting the pace at May's Cedar Key small boat gathering were a couple of Windrider trimarans, the skipper of this one even was comfortable waving (look Ma, one hand!) as he blew by the camera. Not so extreme, but much more numerous, were all the other small boats gathered at this free form annual event. We feature many photos of them in this issue, courtesy of several photographers who were there, starting on page 8.



A damp, dreary, chilly, lamentable March day. Cloudy with a chance of muskrats, as my grandmother used to say. But today I moved *MoonWind* from the marina to the yacht club via Fishers Island Sound, which is not known for abundant reserves of muskrats.

At five o'clock, in steady rain, I was at the helm in my foul weather gear, backing out of my slip at the marina. Messing about and getting my sails soaked for an hour's passage made no sense. The tide assisted me; the wind was abeam at six to eight knots; my motor recited her lines without a stutter. Visibility was limited: at three miles, the ferry to Orient Point appeared a muted, grey-green specter, silently fading into the distant mist. At ten to six, I nosed *MoonWind* into her slip in the shelter of Pine Island, took her forward mooring line, stepped down onto the finger pier, and snubbed her before she could nuzzle up to the walkway.

They've temporarily assigned me this slip at Shennecossett Yacht Club while I wait to be assigned a permanent mooring. First they need to notify all the owners of present moorings, to determine how many members intend to use them. Last season several remained untenanted. As there is no extra space to put down any new moorings, I shall have to purchase the ground tackle from a member who no longer plans to moor his or her vessel, else purchase my own to replace it. A new mushroom anchor, plus chain and pendants and shackles and mooring buoy will cost me a thousand dollars.

Then I have to purchase a set of jack stands. Even second hand, they'll cost me a few hundred dollars. This summer I'll haul *MoonWind*, for the first time in three years, and see how her bottom fairs. In order to keep her in the drink another thirty-six months, I'll need to spend a couple of hundred dollars on bottom paint.

Then I need to pull her stick to replace the masthead light and insulate inside the mast so the wiring doesn't continuously rap, and replace my halyards and at least inspect my standing rigging and possibly replace it. That would be another thousand dollars just for materials. At least I can do all the work myself. Otherwise, I'd never be able to afford to keep any boat much larger than my Whitehall.

Speaking of whom, she presently resides inside my garage. At least I repaired and varnished her last spring, and she hasn't been exposed to sun or weather. But I need to build a new axle to move her about and to load her into my truck. Now that I think about it, she needs at least one coat of bottom paint. My kayak, bless her, doesn't require a thing except a good scrubbing.

What with writing, illustrating, promoting and selling books, taking care of my boats and this house and the yard, I wonder that I have any time to work. Work at a paying job, that is. Because everyone wants my money. It's very generous of them, of course, to relieve me of the burden of having to spend it on myself, but sometimes, only sometimes, I wish I had enough to go around. I send the telephone company two or three dollars and they respond with an angry letter. I give the doctor a ten-dollar bill, or at least a five and four singles, and he wants to know about the odd hundred dollars. It's very provoking of him, to say the least, when he ought to know that *MoonWind* needs a new anchor.

If all these people would only leave me alone, I shouldn't have to work so much in the boatyard, applying varnish to grab rails with my beard and rebedding old mizzen halyards. Then I'd maybe have enough time to work on my memoirs. This is serious business. I meet at least two people each month who compliment me on my last journal entry. If that isn't encouragement, nothing is.

My goal this year is to sell the remainder of the two thousand books my publisher had printed. Then I can inflict my next book on him. It's a self-perpetuating business, rather like life. You have to write books to publish books to sell books to write books. With any luck, a reader or two gets tangled up in the process. Hopefully, the occasional small royalty gets hung up in my pocket.

I love the folks who come up to me after a reading and tell me how much they enjoy my stories, then walk out the door, get in their cars, and go home without my book. I can only hope that their televisions suffer astigmatism, and that termites conspire to eat their library cards.



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You write to us about...

Opinions...

Praise for *Watercraft*

Your recent editorial about publishing prompted me to tell your readers about my second favorite magazine, *Watercraft* (from UK), which I first learnt of in your pages. There are two problems with this, first it cost £30 per year for six issues (about \$45) and second is that most of the contributors make "floating furniture." I would rather be boating than varnishing but it takes all sorts. Nevertheless, it is a very good read and I recommend it.

Malcolm Fifer, Warrior, AL

Bolger's Merlin Revisited

Susanne's revisit of Phil Bolger's Design #428/Merlin/Marina Cruiser in the May issue was a joy. I admired the concept in Phil's book, *Boats With An Open Mind*, but wasn't too sure about the profile drawing. The photos of the actual boat in the water were divine. The shorter wheelhouse and more open cockpit help, and I had had just her thoughts about a hinged tabernacle mast and balanced lug to make the concept about perfect, that is, if any boat can be said to be perfect in either philosophy or practicality. I wasn't a subscriber (or even a boater

other than occasional canoeing) when Phil reviewed the boat back in 1999, and my box of back issues I ordered during your big clean out didn't reach back far enough. Any chance a picture or two of Merlin under sail could be run in a future edition? It is a beautiful boat.

Also attached is a photo of my Dave Gentry designed skin on frame kayak/decked canoe that is slowly taking shape in the garage (landlocked boat house).

John Nystrom, Peru, IN

Projects...

More Boats on the Horizon

I love your magazine as much as ever. I look forward to it immensely and read it avidly. A little bit at a time, kind of dessert at different times. It took me a while to get used to the once a month format because I needed my fix of boats, but I've learned to space it out and my life is still pretty busy so it's all good. At any rate, keep the magazine coming. It is, in this day and age, an absolute miracle that shows up in the mail once a month and I mean to enjoy it as long as I can.

Oh! There's another boat on the horizon here. How does that sound? I've been busy, Herreshoff 12½ (a Haven actually) that I found in *MAIB* a few years ago and fixed up. Then my Rhodes 28 which is close to being done, a fiberglass classic that I put a thousand hours into over the past year and a half redoing almost everything. Next is a SturDee Cat

14' catboat in glass. Haven't seen it yet, but it looks like it will be ours in a kind of "I maintain it and store it and we both get to use it" type situation. Sounds good to me.

Paul Murray, Storrs, CT

Last Summer's Project

As I finish my first year as a subscriber, I'd like to thank you for a great publication. *MAIB* is my kind of magazine, simple, non glossy with lots of great reading.

Late last summer my younger (13 year old) grandson Ben and I completed the construction of an 11' plywood rowboat. I found the (rather minimal) plans on the internet. They may have originally been published in *Mechanics Illustrated*. Ben did all the layout and cutting for the plywood. The two of us tacked it all together and Grampie did the messy fiberglass work and painting. Here is a picture from the October launch.

Dave Crane, Southborough, MA



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Last year I found a Bolger Teal on craigslist. The man who built it did a fine job but learned he didn't like sailing and used it several times as a rowboat and for fishing. Then he put it up in his garage for years. He was moving and had to sell the boat. I bought it and now have it for sale, as I have way too many boats. If that sort of thing is possible.

Along with the boat came a box of past issues of *Messing About in Boats* magazine, from around 1998 to 2002. I have been leaving them around various locations and also putting them in the hands of those who are a bit numb and unaware of *Messing About in Boats* magazine. All who received a copy have been happily surprised at learning of this magazine. I don't know if that will gain more subscriptions or not but...

The thing I found most interesting looking through those magazines from the past are how many regular contributors and boat builders are no longer writing and submitting articles of their projects and adventures. I know some are no longer with us, but many others are likely still around. I was wondering whatever became of them and their products, boats, businesses and such. They were there for years and seemingly suddenly gone.

I think eBay and craigslist must have some impact on selling boats as "instant gratification," but there seems to be no lack of boaters or interested people looking for material in the sort of thing we seem to all be a part of and interested in. I know some have taken over for those who have left, and a lot of very interesting stuff is still to be found among these pages. Dave Lucas and Dan Rogers are good examples.

I guess the economic breakdown of 2008 has done some real damage for some, but realistically the things that we do and write about in regard to small boating, or small boat building using non traditional methods and materials, can be financed using can and bottle refunds and recycling. This is not to say some have real financial difficulties and I don't want to understate the problems that can bring. It is a real strain when one is in that financial situation, especially if one's job is lost. Most of us have been there once or twice depending on our age and history. It is uncomfortable and creates stress, both real and perceived, for there future.

BUT things are beginning to improve now and there is cause for some optimism. The future is looking much better economically, and for those who have similar interests

Some Thoughts on Boating Today

By Greg Grundtsich

in this hobby/affliction called messing about in boats, it is time to take note and encourage those that are still on the fence about boating and messing about in and with them.

I read with great curiosity Dan Rogers' assessment of boating and the future of it. Like him, I grew up watching June Cleaver wearing heels and pearls in the kitchen. It was about that time when wooden boats were being touted as old fashioned and soon to be a thing of the past. Fiberglass was the future and wooden boats were for those who couldn't afford the new modern material. I watched dozens and dozens of wooden boats rot away on the shores of Lakes Erie and Ontario and in every boatyard and marina around. They couldn't give them away. The cool kids had the mahogany runabouts, but they were soon sold and the shiny glass boats with overpowered engines took over the boating scene for the most part. There were always the antique wood and chrome boats but at the time, relatively few.

The early '70s and '80s brought a resurgence of what one wants for his personal water conveyance. Traditional wooden boats were making a comeback. It was cool (socially acceptable perhaps) to have a traditionally built wooden boat, either restored or a new one built. Most of us could not afford a traditionally built boat, save for the discarded ones that some were able to save by doing the restoration or building one themselves. The cost of labor and materials by then had gone through the roof. Then new materials came on the scene and building boats by amateurs and messers became a real doable endeavor.

Plywood, (even the junk at the home improvement store) was becoming better quality with better glue, wood and lamination and changed our thinking of what was possible for building boats. Drywall screws and epoxy became usable and folks like Bolger, Payson and Devlin were designing and building "instant boats" or "stitch and glue" or "quick and dirty" methods and selling books and plans that anyone could build from no matter how inexperienced they were or how limited the space available. That was the way

I got involved in it to some extent. Nowadays that junk ply is really junk, but one still can make a boat out of it. The Happy Hour guys at Dave Lucas' shop are now using creative methods and new materials to build with and anyone can afford the stuff. Foam kayaks?

Dan was saying that there are no longer kids wanting to go boating with their parents and would prefer the mall over driving a boat. He also mentioned the blood sport of being first in and out of the launch ramp with little regard for other boaters. Courtesy, politeness and common sense seem to be a thing of the past.

But there is no lack of kids in the boating world, even with the economic downturn of '08 there are plenty of them on the water and acting rude as ever at the launch ramps. The difference, at least around here in Buffalo, is that they all seem to be launching and driving jet skis. Seems like there is still plenty of money in the hands of parents who buy the annoying things for them. They seem to have no regard for anyone or the rules of the road when around other boaters.

Naomi and I have had our close calls with several of them in the past. With mandatory safety and competency classes for kids under 17 (for all of us if some have their way), it seems like it has little effect on how foolishly they act. Likely poor parenting is at the root of it all. Nothing more obnoxious than a 40 something parent screaming and yelling and acting reckless on a personal watercraft, flying around, jumping wakes and zipping around anchored boaters who are trying to fish or just relax. Good example for the kids, eh? It doesn't fall too far from the tree, no? Plenty of kids are on them, or parents pulling a tube full of them in areas that are not suited for such, and I think on the water enforcement may be a problem, too.

Around here there are no less than eight law enforcement agencies and several volunteer boating safety groups on the water. They seem to have little effect on the behavior of the self indulgent fools. Worse yet is the lack of enforcement of the rules. It would appear that an accident or tragedy is the only time law enforcement gets involved. Sometime I will relate what was said to me when I asked some of the law enforcers why they seem to ignore the recklessness. The reply is very similar to the answer you get when asking cops why they don't give tickets to those who run red lights.

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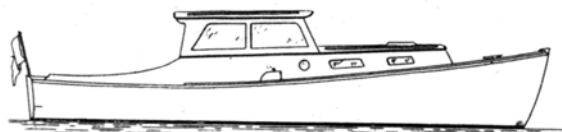
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"Unfortunately knives with fixed or lockable blades are considered offensive weapons by some legislatures, such as here in the UK. They are permitted for specialist uses, like dinghy sailing, but you should avoid taking them off the boat. Safety knives can be obtained for marine use, specially designed so they can be used for cutting a rope but not for stabbing someone. These are fine if all you ever need to do is cut some rope rather than slice bread, cut cake, gut fish, whittle wood or the myriad of other uses for a sharp knife on a cruising boat.

I have sailed on boats where a ship's knife is kept in a scabbard near to the helmsman, instantly ready to cut a rope or perhaps to repel pirates. Maybe there are times when a knife so readily available comes into its own, but I have never known one. Prominently displayed knives are seen as provocative under UK law, so I keep my ship's knife in the stern locker where it is close at hand out of sight." (*The Dinghy Cruising Companion*, Roger Barnes)

First, I want to make clear that this particular wrinkle is about the nanny state and about knives, not Roger Barnes or his book. I have half a dozen instructional books on dinghy cruising (and that doesn't include voyaging accounts). To my eyes Roger Barnes' book is the best. The others are quite good but if I could have only one book I'd take *The Dinghy Cruising Companion*. I highly recommend it.

Back to the point. For a rescue or rigger's knife I personally prefer a blunt end like the coping blade of an electrician's knife. I'm less likely to deflate an inflatable or myself in a critical situation. As for readily available, consider one implication of our modest boats. The smaller or more open a boat, the more eas-



News from the Nanny State What's the Point

ily an object can fall overboard. Against such losses we utilize lanyards, tethers and even harnesses for our own bodies. Those lines are what I worry about, not pirates. Should I get tangled up in a line on the bow (like the painter on a white water canoe) or even underwater, I really don't want that rescue knife to be shut up in a stern locker! Whitewater boaters, rafters, canoeists and kayakers commonly carry rescue knives attached to their PFDs.

Have I ever used my rescue knife in critical situation? No. But neither have I ever critically relied upon my PFD. Yet I still wear one and carry the other. Most of the time both serve as conveniences, the PFD with all its pockets, the knife for all those tasks Mr Barnes mentions. Luckily the Brit gets to keep

his blunt ended rigger's knife. Per usual, the legislators know very little about what they legislate. (The presence or absence of a point has little to do with a knife's offensive capabilities. In fact, the samurai specifically chose his tanto with its blunt tip. I won't go into the drawbacks of a point on a fighting knife. That would likely get me onto some nanny state's watch list.)

There's another reason I want one of my knives handy. (Knives? Hmmm, this fellow warrants watching.) I use my most handy knife whenever I find discarded strands and clumps of fishing line. I make a palm size coil and cut each end of the coil so that no piece of monofilament is longer than 3". That way there's no potential for a loop that could possibly snag wildlife. Even when I'm throwing that stray fishing line in the trash I religiously cut it up because my knife's handy and, who knows, maybe that trash can gets knocked over. If in this manner I use my offensive weapon to protect the little lovelies of mother earth, does that garner me any points with the nanny state? Who knows.

But keep in mind, being able to readily cut up fishing line so that it won't snag a gull or turtle is, in principle, the same idea as being able to readily cut any line on your boat should it possibly snag you.

In short, "Be Prepared," as the Scout motto has it. And what would scouting's founder have to say about all these worries over lockable blades, straight blades, pointed blades and prominently displayed blades? Read up on The Right Honorable Lord Baden-Powell, OM GCMG GCVO KCB. Then imagine the opinion of that Lieutenant General and Baron. And pick up a copy of Roger Barnes' book.



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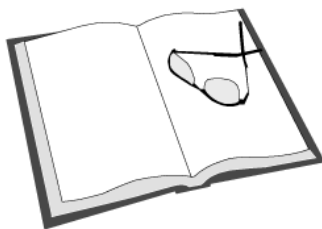
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Our esteemed editor would have probably just dashed off a quick review of this book, since he confessed to having read a paperback reprint of the 19th century original some years ago (20th century, I presume), but he told me he thought this coffee table edition approach was a bit over the top, and Bob asked for my opinion (we might need to start questioning the man's judgment more if he is asking for my opinion on any issue, but that's another issue we can all harass Bob about another time), so here is my take on the new Zenith Press edition.

This, indeed, is another reprint of Owen Chase's recounting of the events he experienced in 1819-1821 as First Mate on the *Essex*, the first recorded sinking of a whale ship by a whale, and the subsequent tale of survival and cannibalism that shocked 19th century America.

This is also at the lower edge in size of those editions referred to as, sometimes disparagingly, coffee table books. The relatively brief text of Chase's memoir is supplemented by several brief 19th and early 20th century accounts of whalers, the whaling fishery, accounts of other whale attacks and sinkings and finally, a recounting of the 19th century's most notorious shipwreck, the wreck of the French frigate *Medusa*, where passengers escaping on lifeboats and launches abandoned 147 of their companions on a makeshift raft off the coast of Africa. Two weeks later only 15 survivors were rescued with a scandalous and horrific tale.

My criticism of the added text is that it is interspersed with Chase's account, which can break up the flow or briefly complicate following the main story line. To clear things up, the added accounts have their texts inset into boarders with typefaces that differ from the Chase text.



Book Review



The Wreck of the Whale Ship Essex

The Extraordinary and Distressing Memoir that Inspired Herman Melville's Moby-Dick


By Owen Chase
Introduction by Gilbert King
Zenith Press, Minneapolis: 2015

Reviewed by John Nystrom

Pulitzer Prize winner Gilbert King adds a useful introduction, but the real coffee table marker of this edition is the illustrations. The endpaper description of the illustrations is "lavish," our Editor's take is "over the top" and my opinion is somewhere in the middle. Illustrations range from reproductions of period etchings and paintings, period artifacts, wildlife and landscape (seascape?) photography and, of course, photos of the *Charles W. Morgan*. If you are just looking for the text of Chase's account, then "over the top" it is. If you are looking for some enjoyment from reading an introduction to the original incident before reading *Moby Dick* (without whichever academic prejudice the scholar brings with themselves), a gift or coffee table edition, then this is a great choice and a fun read. I can't decide whether to keep this one to share someday with the grandkids (they do love pictures), or to donate it to our nautically impoverished local library?



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Cedar Key Small Boat Meet - May 1 - May 3 2015

(Photos by: Ron Hoddinott, Simon Lewandowski, Larry Whited, Doug Cameron, Chris Troop, Dom Romer, Dave Lucas, and Stacey Smith)

Many thanks to our great Squadron members and photographers! Others sent photos and if they weren't used it was just because they were pretty much like the ones I already selected. They are found here: <http://ftp.ij.net/wctss/wctss/photos131.html>
Another great small boat meet is in the books! Ron Hoddinott.



Patrick Johnson's Sea Screacher, a Ross Lillistone Phoenix III sailing in light airs on Saturday.



Doug's Eng's Penobscot 17 from the stern, the view most had of this boat.

Rex and Kathy Payne putting their new Cal-
donia Yawl through its paces.



Black Cortez Melonseed drew lots of attention!

Glen Osling's SMR Beetle Cat replica,
nice sail!



Two really fast Windriders were making passes in front of the Cedar Key docks on Friday.



Meade Gougeon makes his way to the beach aboard *Voyager*, his EC racing sail canoe.

Bill Palumbo's CS 17 sailing well on Saturday.





Bernard and Genise's brand new Welsford Pathfinder with custom cabin! Just launched!



The black Opti was back again this year!



The Scamp with the curved mast and yawl rig sailing.

Bill Fite and Gary Hirsch aboard *Moon-Shadow* on Friday, reefed down!



Steve Woods' Bay Hen.



Drascombe Dabber with lovely dark tanbark sails!

Marty Worline's Scamp sailing well!



Rob White's tiny Felucca being lifted over the shoals by Wes White and friends.



Eric and Jane's Houdini, *BelaFonte*, heading for the shore.



Ancient SeaPearl and Doug Cameron's new CS 20 Mk. III anchored off the Faraway Inn.

Goke's sailing Bufflehead canoe





Little 13 footer from Knife River Minnesota, so well done and reportedly purchased at CK by Tosh.



Captain Michael Jones and lovely wife Judith took me out aboard their William Garden Eel, Aunt Louise.



The famous SeaPearl *MoonShadow* in non racing trim.



Great shot of Goke's Bufflehead and the original Bufflehead canoe designed by Hugh Horton.



Bernard's Pathfinder on Atsena Otie Key.



Pat Ball's strip planked Rob White Sport Boat.



Christi Lewandowski looking under the bridge to the inner harbor. Low tide is really low tide at Cedar Key!



Bill Palumbo's Core Sound 17 with custom cabin.



Pat's SeaScreacher, the Scamp with unusual curved mast, and Goke's Bufflehead canoe.



Some people bring all the comforts to stay awhile!

Saturday scene at Atsena Otie Key!

There they go! Still out there playing in the wind as seas. Join us next year, first full weekend in May!





Pat Jackson's Mirage showing his fleet vessel on Thursday's sail to Specter Island.

The 2015 Florida 120

Photos by Pat Johnson, Scott Widmier, and others as submitted to FaceBook
Submitted by Dave Lucas

You can keep the long distance racing with no sleep or rest, I'll take this one instead. The Florida 120 looks like a lot of fun, you can even bring your motor boat if it's cool looking. This is the kind of thing the Trailer Sailors do all the time but this one attracts everyone from all over. I bet it gets bigger every year. Thanks for the pictures, Ron.



Doug Engh sailing his Penobscot 17.



Bandaloop sailing in to Sand Key.



Patrick Johnson of Wellington, Florida, sailing his Fat Cat *Kat Kan Dew* east on Thursday.



Scot Widmier's self designed sloop based roughly on a San Francisco Great Pelican. First time out.

Aaron Ward and his Nancy's China from Garden Valley, Texas.



Is this Phillip Lea's 18' open lug rig?



Tim Webb with his well sailed O'Day Day-Sailer II.



Sand Island anchorage, note hills in background. A rough day, but look at all the boats!



Here's Ron Hoddinott adjusting the new auto pilot on *Nomad*, his ComPac SunCat.



John and Amanda Huff's Norms Boat from Wewahitchka, Florida.



Scott Gosnell and daughter Savannah sailed this just built Michalak IMB.



Norm's Boat in afternoon light.

Scott Whitmier's sloop running for home on Sunday, Bayou Chico.



Pat Jackson's fast sloop passing Ron Hoddinott's slower SunCat. Ron is looking for his phone to take a photo. It was gone.





Hafren Round~Britain Challenge

Phillip Kirk

(Photograph: through the Merry Men of Mey, Pentland Firth, slack water)

Reprinted from *Dinghy Cruising*, Journal of the Dinghy Cruising Association (UK)
dinghycruising.org.uk

Record: 32 days, 3 hours – and £10,059 raised for their charities in 2014

Part II: Scrabster to Weymouth

(June 20th to July 2nd, 2014)

OUR WELCOME AT SCRABSTER was the first to include groupies: a few local sailors who had been following our adventure, including one who had taken some photos of us passing Strathy point on the north coast.

We spent a full day re-supplying the boat, writing another press release, catching up with navigation and making a few repairs. These preps cost us a day of progress but allowed us to negotiate the Pentland Firth on the next morning tide. The RNLI and Pentland Firth Yacht Club had advised us on the tides and where we should expect the overfalls.

Following the local advice we left Scrabster at 9:00am but met breaking seas at Dunnett Head. After 20 minutes conditions had improved, indicating the back eddy had turned in our favour.

We reached the Merry Men of Mey overfalls at true slack water and passed through without taking on water, although it was still quite choppy.

We were soon at Duncansby

Head and able to turn south into the North Sea. Making good speed in fresh broad-reaching conditions we realised that we could cross the Moray Firth towards Fraserburgh, cutting

Approaching Lulworth Cove



off a huge corner. There was a chance of a force 6 so we phoned Rob for a more detailed forecast, which suggested that we could see a force 6 but only for a short time, after which the wind would ease. It was now a race to get south before we lost the wind or before it turned against us.

We crossed the Moray Firth in force 4-5 following winds and made very good progress. The conditions were perfect. That night, as we were passing Fraserburgh, the winds built and with them the sea state. Soon we were surfing down every wave in the steep seas even with reefed sails. I woke Jeremy just before we surfed down a large wave, half-expecting the boat to broach as we hit the back of the wave in front. Fortunately we stayed in control but decided to take the main down and continue under genoa until dawn.

Once round the corner and heading towards Aberdeen the seas flattened and we re-hoisted the main. We had averaged between 5-6 knots all the way from Scrabster, making brilliant progress, and reached Aberdeen after only 24 hours.

There was no time to stop and we carried on in easing winds and drifted through a second night. The following day we crossed the Forth estuary and Reached Lindisfarne as the wind died. This was our first landfall on English soil since leaving Weymouth. With the tide out we could walk from the boat



Jeremy enjoying some sunshine

through the shallows to the shore. We camped that night near the harbour with a great view of the Castle and Priory.

The following day we were woken by a colony of seals. That day the winds died off to nothing and we ended up paddling for 6 hours, mostly against the tide to our destination of Amble. We were met by a local lifeboat man and shown to the B&B. In these stays ashore we would charge all the electronic devices, some with several sets of batteries, and hand-

wash clothes. Jeremy may have reduced the life of a number of hotel hair driers drying his boots out.

On our 5th day since leaving Scrabster we resupplied, topped up with water and repaired the floorboard hatch again. The local boatyard kindly lent us the use of their workshop and gave us offcuts to do this job, which saved a lot of time. We then set off again towards Bridlington. The NE force 3-4 gave us good reaching conditions and we made fast progress on the direct course to Flamborough Head. Through the night we saw a few ships and came close to a tug towing an oil production barge. Both vessels were lit up like Christmas trees, making it impossible to see their navigation lights or even tell which way they were heading.

Sailing at night - Phil





Navigating under way, and dead on course

We reached Bridlington the following afternoon, entering the harbour well before the tide was high enough for a yacht. Here we met another pair of Wayfarer cruisers and enjoyed the evening exchanging cruising tips over fish and chips.

We left Bridlington at 5 hours after high water, a little later than intended, but you can't turn down a good cooked breakfast. In the harbour we were touching the muddy bottom, requiring Jeremy to get out and push.

Eventually we sailed out of the harbour and set a course across the Wash and towards Norfolk.

That night we were passed by ships leaving Grimsby and the wind eased and headed us. The following morning (our eighth day since Scrabster) we were beating past Cromer and the tide was turning. We made slow progress down the coast. All the beaches were exposed to the east

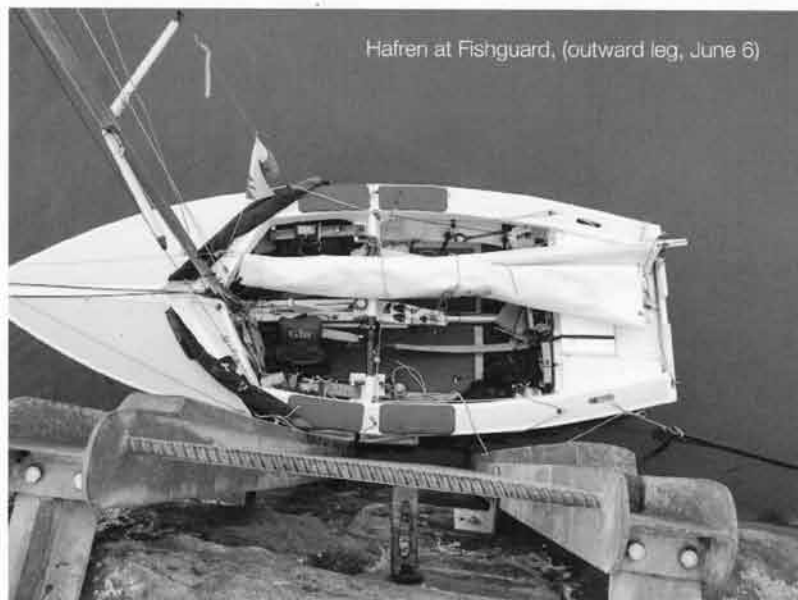
so there was nowhere to stop, and we had to carry on hugging the coast to keep out of the tide.

The wind slowly increased with the tide until it started raining and we experienced a full thunderstorm. Now beating against a solid force 5 and the tide we were going nowhere.

Fortunately we were able to creep through the sea defences to reach the shelter behind, and the village of Sea Palling. After 2 hours, some fish and chips and a chat with the life guards we set off again feeling much better.

The rain had cleared, the tide had turned and the wind had eased. We passed Great Yarmouth making 8 knots over the ground and entered Lowestoft harbour shortly after the wind had died for the evening. To avoid getting swept past the entrance we paddled close to the shore, letting the tide sweep us in under darkness. We received an almost Royal welcome at the Royal Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club, being invited into the member's bar after we had cleaned ourselves up a little.

“ ... possible to complete the trip in under 30 days,
but only with the experience we had gained on the
way round and in the same conditions ”



Hafren at Fishguard, (outward leg, June 6)

Having made such good progress we were on a mission to get to Weymouth and set a really good time for sailing round Britain. With renewed enthusiasm we woke early and packed the boat ready to leave on the early morning tide. We were surprised and honoured to be met by Ralph Roberts of the Wayfarer Association. Having a wealth of dinghy cruising under his belt he was interested to see how we had set the boat up for our trip.

We were keen to share some of our tales with him but soon it was time to go.



Mainsail taken down off Rattrey Head when some steep seas were encountered at the headland after crossing the Moray Firth. We took the reefed main down to calm the boat and sailed with the furled genoa for 2 hours until dawn arrived.

With the tide and light winds we made good progress, reaching Felixstowe Ferry on the river Deben by 2:00pm only to find the tide flowing south out of the river at 6 knots. The main tide was flowing north at 2 knots.

The harbourmaster gave us a tow from the mouth of the river to the sailing club slipway. This stop was intended to be for a resupply only but as the wind had died to nothing and was not forecast to stabilise till the morning we opted to camp in the dinghy park. The club members were interested to hear our stories and lent us a launching trolley. This was the first time the boat had been out of the water since Weymouth and a layer of green slime was forming on the hull. The pan scourer was put to use removing the slime and making the hull look shiny again.

At dawn the following morning we set off but were out of phase with the tides. Having zig-zagged across the Thames Estuary to avoid wind farms and sandbanks we passed Ramsgate as the tide turned against us.

Despite the strong following wind the tide slowed our progress and it wasn't until late afternoon that we reached Dover.

The harbour master allowed us through the main entrance of Dover harbour, making a ferry wait. He also tweeted a picture of us. After a cup of tea with some friends we set off again heading for Lymington. The wind turned from the northeast to the east and although it wasn't too strong we made steady progress.

As we approached Dungeness a large rain cloud bore down on us, obscuring the land. Fearing the worst we reefed down but instead of strong winds we just

got very wet. This also made the night feel very cold. Throughout the following day we passed the Seven Sisters, Newhaven, Shoreham and Selsey Bill. Finally we had the Solent in sight but the tide was turning against us.

Amazingly we were able to fly the spinnaker all the way from Ryde to Lymington, crossing from the island shore to the mainland shore after Cowes. Once in shallower water and out of the tide we made better progress. However we nearly sailed into an unlit groyne. One of the dangers of dinghy cruising and being able to sail in shallow waters is the number of additional hazards you can hit.

We reached Lymington just after midnight and were escorted in by three dinghies, a kayak and two RIBs. This night sailing might just catch on. Now we were nearing the end of the trip we had a lot of people following us on social media. We couldn't muck it up now but did have some strong tides and overfalls to sail through in a force 5 to reach Lulworth Cove. It was an amazing sail in familiar waters and only took 4 hours.

Jeremy's brother met us at the beach and we off-loaded our kit and I sailed the boat out to a mooring. Not having a dinghy I had to swim ashore. The hotel

Beating to windward in the dark





was not just a dog-friendly one but a dog-obligatory one. We were the only guests without a dog.

We were in high spirits for our final leg of 7 miles to Weymouth. We had prearranged a finishing time 2 days before and had time to spare so once near Weymouth

we did a victory loop, which can be seen on the tracker, before entering the harbour. We were escorted in by two yachts and two launches filled with friends and family. It was a great welcome back to dry land.

During this adventure we covered 1,667 nautical miles in 32

days 3 hours with a total sailing time of 19 days 12 hours.

Our average speed was 3.66 knots which was not far off our estimated speed. We had sailed through 15 nights. During the trip we had been out of sight of land for several hours on 9 occasions and sometimes up to 30 miles offshore. It would have been possible to complete the trip in under 30 days but only with the experience we had gained on the way round and the same conditions.

We had been blessed by excellent sailing conditions and weather, got close to the wildlife and been privileged with some special views of the coastline and amazing sunsets.

Everyone has said this record is going to stand for a long time and will take a very dedicated team to beat it. What the trip did prove to us is that 'adventure dinghy cruising' gives a great sense of freedom. It rewards good planning, decision-making and perseverance with an immense sense of achievement and some amazing sailing. Sailing at night is do-able – but a little more scary. PK



This page: no captions needed!

Four months after Cecily and I met, I was rotating as a medical student at a hospital on the outskirts of West Palm Beach, Florida. I had (and still have) a habit of browsing the online classifieds for small boats and stumbled across a listing for a Chesapeake Light Craft Skerry for sale in Camden, New Jersey. Cecily was living in Philadelphia at the time and I asked her if she would take delivery of the boat for me, promising to reimburse her upon my return north. She agreed and I knew then that one day I would marry her.

I finished my Florida rotation in March and headed north to Philadelphia. Cecily and I spent our spare time getting to know the boat, named by its previous owner as *The Day Off*. Though he had billed himself as a cabinetmaker, at best I could say about our new vessel is that it had a workboat finish, the hull was painted red with house paint up to the waterline with a white bootstripe. *The Day Off* was scrawled freehand in black paint on the bow. The interior was finished bright-ish but the epoxy fillets along the thwarts and along the daggerboard trunk were sloppy and with jagged edges. We joked that the former owner was an aspiring cabinet builder.

Nonetheless, she didn't leak, the spars were newly varnished and the sail was brand new. Actually, her level of finish suited us just fine because it meant we could drill holes in her, make modifications, load her down, drag her around and otherwise abuse our little craft without feeling too badly as we learned her ins and outs and improved our skill as sailors. We took her out the first time on March 26, trailering her down to Delaware for Cecily's birthday. We attempted to sail her in the shallow marshes off of Delaware Bay in Force 6 winds and wound up running her aground, snapping the daggerboard in half. We broke the gooseneck, too.

April found us making a new and better daggerboard. We also ordered a new gooseneck from the folks at Chesapeake Light Craft.

We spent May afternoons on local waters. We launched her one afternoon from outside an abandoned warehouse and rowed her up the Schuylkill River into Center City, Philadelphia, with a picnic basket and beer in tow. A small wooden boat, messing about on the upper Schuylkill, is a rarity. Thus joggers, school kids and passersby greeted us with glee, waving and calling to us from the parks and walkways that line the river bank. We happily met their cheers with waves. We also took her for a daysail in Carnegie Lake during a visit to my parents in Princeton, New Jersey. I also learned how to repack trailer bearings.



Rowing up the Schuylkill.

In June we joined the Maine Island Trail and spent our evenings poring over the spiral bound guide they sent us, pondering potential trips and campsites. We settled on Vinalhaven.

In July we packed up my old Suburban with camping gear, hitched up *The Day Off*

The Day Off Camp Cruising the Shores of Vinalhaven in a Wooden Skerry

By G. Michael Krauthamer, MD

and headed north toward my home in Vermont and then on to Maine. While we were stopping at an auto parts store in Philly, on our way out of town, to buy magnetic trailer lights, a man walked up to the boat, put his hand on the gunwale and said, "Nice boat, I bet she'd be good for fishing."

"Yeah," I said, "maybe, you should get yourself one."

"Maybe you're right," he said. "*A Day Off*, that's what I need."

"Don't we all," I said as I affixed the lights to the rear of the trailer. I bid him farewell and we were off.

Both Cecily and I had some sailing experience, me considerably more than her, but the experience of owning a trailer sailer was new to us. We worried about the trailer constantly, particularly as we crossed the White Mountains and later as we bumped along the rarely maintained backroads of western Maine. We stayed with a friend in Thomaston during our first night in Maine, woke up at dawn and headed for Rockland. We ate a large breakfast at the Brass Compass Café and pondered sailing to Vinalhaven versus cartopping *The Day Off* on the Suburban and taking the ferry across.

We had yet to have her in anything approximating big water, and we were not yet sure of her abilities or our own, so we were both wary of sailing the six or so miles from Rockland. Owing to her flared sides, the skerry was pretty unwieldy to lift above shoulder height, and while we had put her on the roof before, it was not a process we wanted to repeat unnecessarily. None of this mattered because when we arrived at the ferry terminal at 7am we were told that there would be room for the car, boat and trailer.

Vinalhaven is a beautiful and sleepy little island, respectably shabby, the way that fishing shacks are shabby. We lingered in the ARC Café, self described as a non profit "social enterprise" café which sadly is now shuttered. We had bought a chart of Penobscot Bay while in Rockland, but were surprised to learn, after arriving, that a paper chart detailing the waters surrounding the Fox Islands (Vinalhaven and North Haven) could not be found on Vinalhaven. The proprietor of the Paper Store on the island admitted, somewhat sadly, that they used to carry paper charts but stopped several years back since most people had switched to GPS.

"Not us," I said.

He said, "I'm sorry. It's a shame really." We made do with the chart we had.

We had purchased a second set of oars back in Vermont and now stopped at a boatyard to borrow a screw gun for installing a pair of locks we had also picked up. The yard manager happily obliged us. His good will was short lived, however, and he was considerably gruffer (but more characteristically New England) when I then asked to also borrow a drill bit. He mumbled something about how I should not forget to leave the tools on his workbench when I finished as he was headed home for lunch. Last minute modifi-

cations complete, we returned the tools, along with a sincere thank you note, clambered back into the car and began to meander across the island, in search of a point of departure.



Cecily installing an additional set of oarlocks.

We ultimately launched the boat from a small cove in Winter Harbor. The tide was going out, which we figured would be a good thing, allowing us to ride the ebb as we rowed toward Little Hen Island. However, while we had remembered to pick up a tide table in Rockland, we had not taken the time to familiarize ourselves with some key aspects, specifically that the difference between low and high tide can be as much as 15' vertically. On a shallow beach, such as where we were preparing to launch, the horizontal distance can be much greater.

We discovered this the hard way, by the time we finished loading *The Day Off* the tide had receded from our boat by about 50 yards. Loaded down, the boat sank into the dark, sticky mud. We partially unloaded her, then skimmed her lightened hull across the mud to the water's edge, fastened a long painter to her bow, pushed her into the water and tied the painter to a rock. In this way the boat would stay afloat and we would be able to haul her to shore in order to load our gear, pushing her back into deep water when we returned to the car for another load.

Our plan was to quickly reload the boat in the aforementioned manner and set off, but we discovered that carrying our gear across this newly appeared mudflat was arduous and slow, loaded with gear we quickly sank up to our knees in mud. It poured over the tops of my rubber boots and caked us both. Cecily fell at one point and could not stand up again without help because the soft mud offered little resistance to push against. We tried going barefoot but razor sharp clamshells, embedded in the mud, slashed our feet. We noticed the skeletons of other critters that had suffered the misfortune of getting stuck in the mud, unable to escape when the tide came back in. We joked that this was the manner in which the dinosaurs must have gone extinct and decided to name this place "Treachery Flats."

We finally managed to portage our gear to the boat by picking our way along rocks that jutted out into the cove so that we only had to slog through the mud for the last ten yards or so. The entire process took more than three hours, but the sun was shining and, despite our exhaustion, our minor wounds and being covered in mud, the whole experience was so ridiculous that we had to laugh at ourselves as we considered how appalling our performance must have appeared to

the Maine Salts who slowed to watch us as they drove by. We reflected on the fact that some things, such as the significance of tide changes, are best learned by hard won experience. Thus, with this valuable lesson well learned, we easily forgave ourselves for our landlubberliness. Most importantly, we had prevailed and by three o'clock we were officially launched and drifting leisurely toward Little Hen Island.



Rowing to Little Hen.

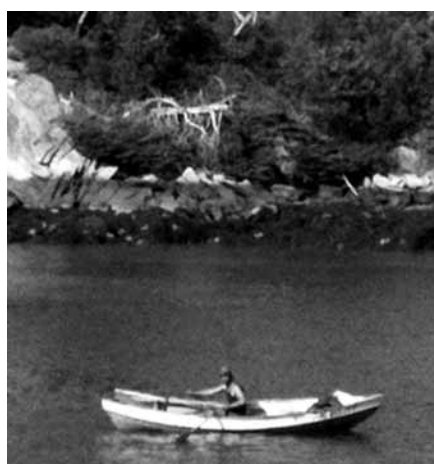
Little Hen is a tiny little rock of an island. At low tide the campsite sits on a precipice high above the water and looks out on a sand bar to the north. Accessing the campsite at low tide requires scaling a rock slope along the east side of the island. At high tide we could row right up to the campsite along the north side. We had a little trouble picking Little Hen out from amongst the different islands in the area and pulled up briefly on what turned out to be Big Hen Island to check the chart and compass. Cecily, in an impressive display of orienteering, lined up the points on our handheld compass with the chart and correctly identified Little Hen about 100 yards away. I started composing wedding vows in my mind.

We arrived at Little Hen shortly thereafter, just as the tide began its return. Unloading our gear on the rocks on the east side of the island, Cecily carried our gear to the campsite and set up our tent, while I brought *The Day Off* around to the sandbar on the north side and did my best to scrub the mud off her. Engaged in rinsing her hull, I failed to notice that tide had advanced by several feet, carrying off our life jackets, sails and one set of oars. Aghast, I jumped in the boat and managed to collect these items before they were swept out to sea. I looked up at our campsite to see Cecily serenely surveying the landscape. I frantically yelled to her and, seeing me wet and muddled, she fell into a fit of laughter.

Cleaning off the mud as the tide comes in.



Treachery Flats at Winter Harbor.



Rescuing the gear that floated away on the incoming tide.

Near sunset the tide was almost in when a small sailboat anchored abreast of Little Hen in a serene hole of deep water about 100 yards to our southeast between our island and another larger island to the east. Two men sat in the cockpit eating dinner while watching us rig *The Day Off* for a sunset sail. Setting out, we circumnavigated the larger island to

the north and, as we brought these gentlemen up on our starboard side, they applauded us and shouted "bravo."

As the sun fell below the horizon we pulled our vessel up to our campsite, an easy task now that the tide was in. We would launch her in the morning at the next high tide. The two men in the anchored boat were still watching us. We gave a wave, which they returned in kind before retiring below. We built a small fire on a some exposed granite by the water's edge and watched the stars come out, reflecting on our day in whispers, punctuated occasionally by the hiss of steam from the burning driftwood. The cabin lights in the anchored sailboat were dark and the water shone brightly in the moonlight.



High tide at sunset on our first night.



Keeping the cream cool.

I awoke at sunrise the next morning to the sound of lobster boats in the distance and the sound of chain over a windlass as our neighbors weighed anchor and motored off. I started a fire and started frying eggs. Cecily had put a bottle of cream in a canvas sack, tied a line to the sack and tossed the sack itself into the water to keep it from spoiling. She hauled this out now as I waited for the coffee to boil. After breakfast, we climbed into *The Day Off* with both sets of oars, our sailing rig, a fishing pole and a ukulele and rowed back to Treachery Flats, pleased that we would arrive at high tide.

"Seal!" Cecily yelled as we weaved among mooring balls and surveyed the shoreline, dotted with lobster traps and scrub pines. A smooth head, round and wet like a river stone, and two curious black eyes stared at us off our port side. The seal accompanied us for a few minutes as Cecily talked to it before heading off to sunbathe with some of its own kind on rocks in the distance.

Arriving back at Treachery Flats, we tied our boat to a tree and drove to town to have another look around, pick up some lunch supplies and plan our boat outing for the day. We also stopped by the Fisherman's Co-op and picked up two live lobsters on the cheap. We returned to the boat around 11:00 as the tide was beginning to go out again.

"Let's go, quickly!" Cecily said. We jumped into the boat, hung the lobsters in a mesh bag over one side and fastened the bag to the gunwale. We had decided to circumnavigate the northeast corner of Vinalhaven, which would bring us through a small portion of the Fox Island Thoroughfare. Using the oars, we raced the ebbing tide, poling our trusty vessel under the tiny bridge connecting Calderwood Neck to the rest of the Vinalhaven, pleased that our tiny craft allowed us to explore these little areas that bigger boats could only dream of seeing.

In this way, we entered the Mill River. Still under oars, we navigated boiling waters, jutting rocks and small rapids created by the receding water. When the river widened and calmed, out near Broom Island, we raised the mast and sprit sail and headed for Dobbin Rock and the northeast entrance of the Fox Island Thoroughfare under sail. Our little craft handled admirably, the wind was perfect at approximately 12 knots over our beam and the sun shone benevolently.

As we approached Salt Works Cove the wind picked up some, the sky became overcast and it began to drizzle. The wind was now directly on the nose. We left the mast up and close hauled the sail. We released the

snotter to scandalize the sprit, but after a few minutes decided we were being overly cautious and raised the sprit again. Cecily pulled two raincoats and couple of beers out of our backpack. I rigged a fishing pole with a small lure and began trolling. We took turns rowing and fishing. We kept the boat about 100 yards offshore, figuring that if the weather really turned foul, we could haul out on the shore and avail ourselves of the kindness of some local or, failing that, build a fire on the beach and dry out.



Sailing in the rain.

The weather did not worsen however, and eventually the drizzle stopped. *The Day Off* bobbed along merrily, handling the small chop with aplomb. We row sailed up to Little Hen just as the sun was setting. That night I broiled the lobsters over a driftwood fire with new potatoes, a bottle of champagne, baguette and roasted garlic. Cecily played her ukulele and we sang love songs and sea shanties.

Lobster dinner.



After breakfast on the third day, we took off our clothes and dared each other to brave the frigid water. Cecily dove in first. As we dried ourselves in the late morning sun, a flush decked wooden cutter resembling a Stone Horse sailed into view. The skipper, a blonde haired man close to my age, certainly no older than 35, anchored in the same deep water hole where the small sailboat had been on our first night. A young woman with two toddlers, a boy and a girl, emerged from the cabin. The family climbed into a small dinghy towed astern. They rowed out of sight on the far side of Big Hen, and then back into view.

We got the sense that they were looking for a picnic spot or maybe a spot to camp. They eyed Little Hen. The only decent thing to do seemed to move on and allow some other adventurers to enjoy this little slice of paradise. We waved. "We'll be leaving shortly," I said. They waved back. The skipper dropped the young woman and children off on the near side of Big Hen. The children entertained themselves by the water's edge while the woman sat on the rocks and eyed them watchfully. The skipper returned to their boat and busied himself in the cockpit. I packed our gear while Cecily examined the chart for possible points of interest. We took about an hour to decamp. Boat loaded, we rowed back toward Treachery Flats, waving to the children as we passed.

Leaving Little Hen with a boatload of gear.



Back on the muddy banks of our launch site, we decided to leave most of our gear in the boat. Because the tide was up, we were able to pull the trailer down to the water by hand and float the boat on. With considerable effort we then hauled the boat trailer, again by hand, loaded with the boat plus gear, several yards up the launch ramp far enough for us to back the truck down and tow everything out with the truck in four wheel drive.

We drove to town, picked up coffee and a loaf of bread and wandered over to Grimes Park to look at the boats in the harbor. We were strolling back to town, still undecided regarding our next point of departure, when we were momentarily distracted by flyers posted in the window of a real estate office. One flyer showed an old house and boathouse on the west side of the island with easy access to Hurricane Sound.

We decided to drive by it to check it out. We easily found the dilapidated old farmhouse. It had weathered cedar siding and gray trim. The driveway was empty and it appeared unoccupied. We peered in the windows and the lack of furniture confirmed this. The boathouse was set up as an artist's or architect's studio but had been unused for decades. The front yard jutted into the water and was covered in wild roses and lilac bushes. We dubbed this place the "Maine Dreamhouse" and launched *The Day Off* from the front yard. Just in case someone did come by in our absence, we left a note in the windshield of the truck, introducing ourselves and thanking the landowners in advance for their hospitality.

As we rowed out to one of the small islands in Hurricane Sound, we pointed out our favorite houses along the island's coastline and talked dreamily about someday owning a little cottage on the water. We arrived at a campsite around lunchtime, quickly unloaded and then went for a sail. We were ghosting southward on a beam reach, Lawry's Point coming up on our starboard quarter, when a pod of dolphins passed to port, then circled back, surrounding *The Day Off* on both sides, then headed north again as if beckoning us. We brought the boat about to follow them, leaving Lawry's Point astern, and just as we did so we heard the horn from the *Captain Charles Philbrook*, one of Vinalhaven's two ferry boats. Looking over our shoulder we saw it appear suddenly, entering Lawry's Point from the west. We had narrowly averted crossing directly in front of her path, the dolphins saved us! (Another lesson learned, check the ferry schedule when sailing in the vicinity of its route.)

Once we were well out of harm's way, the pod swam on except for one baby dolphin, no bigger than a collie, which continued swim alongside our boat. I scrambled for the camera, but before I could find it one of the adults circled back to round up the youngster and both swam off to rejoin the others, two dorsal fins reappearing periodically as the loped off into the distance. Even today we recollect this experience with a certain mystical amazement.

Returning to our island, I dug for clams in the sand. Our new island was much bigger than Little Hen but not as picturesque. Also, the shoreline consisted of sloped rock on all sides and the distance to the high tide mark was too far and too precarious to haul the boat. I was worried that the boat would bang against the rocks as the tide came in, or alternately be inaccessible at high tide if we



Our Maine dreamhouse.

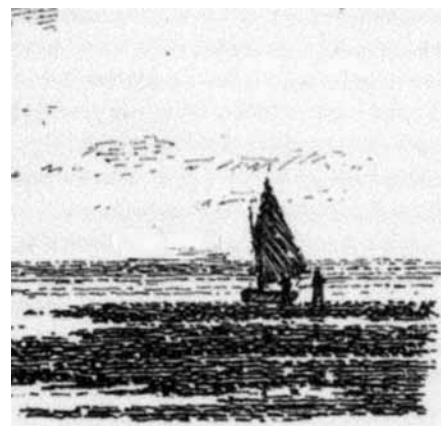
set an anchor in the sand. Ultimately, I wound up setting the anchor off the stern, burying it by hand in sand exposed at low tide. I then tied a long painter to a tree on shore. The idea was that the anchor would hold the boat off the rocks, and in the morning I would use the painter to drag boat and anchor to shore.

If the anchor held fast, despite my pulling I would have to swim. If it dragged in the night, the painter would at least keep the boat from drifting away even if she did get scraped up on the rocks. Cecily said I was being overly anxious about the whole thing, and I said she wasn't anxious enough. We wound up bickering. Later, as I roasted clams over the fire and complained that they were too chewy, Cecily laughed at me and called me grumpy old man, and then I laughed at myself and the laughter cheered us both.

We awoke the next morning to light fog. I was able to pull the boat and the anchor to shore without incident. We made toast and coffee for breakfast and packed the boat quietly, absorbing the throaty rumble of the lobster boats, a bell buoy and the *Captain Charles Philbrook* in the distance. We rowed back to our Maine Dreamhouse, packed the car, loaded the trailer and caught the next ferry back to Rockland. We headed south toward Portland and ate lobster rolls near Seal Harbor. We stopped at the LL Bean outlet so that we could try shooting arrows in their 24 hour archery range, we feigned interest in learning to bow hunt and asked questions to suggest we would probably buy something.

By late afternoon it was raining in torrents. Traffic on the Interstate crawled. Because visibility was so poor, some cars gave up all together and pulled onto the shoulder, hazards flashing. We turned on the radio then turned it off again, drove in silence with our eyes fixed on the road, minds' eyes reliving recent events, Little Hen, the dolphins, the Dream House. The boat filled up like a bathtub and we worried about the trailer but needn't have, it towed fine.

Headed home.



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I pulled off Rt 77 to get an order of fish and chips at Evelyn's Drive-in. I thought I'd better make time to get a hot meal to help keep me grounded as I was getting a bit hyper. The day was ticking by and I was going full speed ahead with my next boating scheme. And like Coach Pete Carroll, I was pumped and jacked. While sitting on a bench waiting for my order, my heart was beating so hard it seemed to be slightly rocking me from side to side.

Lordy. It's not like at my age I don't have health concerns and that includes my heart. I reminded myself I was not about to blast off in the space shuttle or bungee jump off the Mt Hope Bridge. No, I was only planning to sail my 12' boat in the lower Sakonnet River, part of Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay complex.

Well, people have different adrenal capacities, so while some are astronauts, some of us have more modest adventures. Yet I could hardly be more excited about finally sailing on this body of water, although success was yet to be determined.

A favorite bike ride for me is along the beautiful Sakonnet River from Tiverton to Sakonnet Point. I would always stop about midway at Fogland Beach where I had found a broken down, obscure boat ramp. Every time I saw it I'd think, yes, this could work for splashing my Stornoway 12 right into the quiet majesty of the mighty Sakonnet. And today lined up as the day for giving it a shot.

This "river" is actually a clean, eight mile tidal straight, one to two miles wide with a picturesque rural shoreline. It is partially sheltered water and the chart showed rocky shoals only in a few spots near shore. One can get a striking aerial view from the Salomonnet River Bridge as it arcs from the heights of Massachusetts into Rhode Island at the juncture of Mt Hope Bay to the north and the Sakonnet River to the south.

Of the three passages leading through the Narragansett Bay system, renowned for its sailing history, the Sakonnet has by far the least boat traffic and presents itself as downright bucolic. It runs due south from the narrows at Tiverton to the open ocean between Sakonnet Point and 3rd Beach on the backside of Newport. This will be big time salt water sailing for my little trailer sailor.

I'd only managed to sail this boat about six or seven times since I bought it a few years ago, and my mastery of the little beast had progressed from hair raising to détente to occasional modest decorum. But today was going to be a new situation with unanswered questions about the prevailing elements, quasi legal parking and one funky ramp.

I had trailered it almost two hours from Boston and was hustling to get launched against a falling tide. Like most of the sub prime ramps I'm drawn to, I suspected a low tide would make it problematic or even impossible to launch from. My chart revealed the curious phenomenon of a shallow shelf extending out from the ramp for some 50 yards and wrapping around the shore over to the popular Fogland Beach. The chart read the shelf to be 1' of water at mean low tide. While my boat only draws 10" with the rudder and centerboard kicked up, it didn't seem like a good margin of error to let all the water run out.

No wonder this ramp was forlorn as it would only be available at fairly high tides to fishermen sporting heavy outboards or boats with any draft. And it was totally exposed to

Improvisational Boating

By Randall Brubaker
randallbrubaker@earthlink.net

the prevailing wind. The ramp has a very flat angle, yet four wheel drive would be comforting on the crumbling cement covered in places with sand and seaweed flotsam. On the internet I had found two somewhat unsettling entries about this site. From Kayak Access RI:

"A right-of-way located at the end of Fogland Road... leads to an old concrete boat launching ramp on the Sakonnet River. The ramp is deteriorated but launching of kayaks is OK. There is no parking on the site but parking is available at Fogland Beach about one-quarter mile away."

But while biking, I had observed that there were three informal parking spots adjacent to the ramp for vehicles with trailers and never saw anyone get ticketed. And blessedly no "Resident Only" parking signs. Since I was attempting to use this on a weekday, I dearly hoped to snag one of these unmarked parking spots. But on a perfect August day, one never knows who's playing hooky and would rather be fishing.

The other website entry was Rhode Island Blueways Alliance:

"The Sakonnet River is relatively open and exposed so pay careful attention to the weather and tides before you set out and while you are on the water. On most days the southwest wind fills in strongly in this area in the morning and blows briskly throughout the afternoon, producing strong waves. There is a concrete plank boat ramp here that is reported to be in somewhat poor condition."

The forecast for today was a moderate 10 knots of wind, this mild August wind condition was ideal for my British designed, gaff rigged sailing dingy, or maybe it was ideal for me, as the boat may be saltier than the skipper. I wanted to avail myself of this opportunity and I was pretty sure I could make the situation work.

In my mental planning, I envisioned putting the mast up while the boat was still on the trailer. Then launching it and walking it over to a nice sandy spot where I'd pull the stern up onto the beach to point the bow into the onshore breeze. With the boat steady, I'd set up the sails without raising them.

I hoped to mount the fully extended 2hp outboard but expected not to be able to mount the kick up rudder with the transom squatting in the sand. I would need to push the boat into water deep enough to align the rudder's two pintles into the transom's gudgeons. And this time I would remember to get the tiller UNDER the mainsheet traveler because you know what happened last time I did that, messy, I think it's on YouTube.

I anticipated trouble mounting the rudder and raising the sails when standing offshore while holding the boat into the wind with one hand. Previously, even using both hands while onshore, this novice gaff sailor had never gotten the rig up without some fussy string twiddling. Getting the gaff mainsail to set on the diminutive platform of a 12' boat was proving to be a little trickier than I imagined when I bought the romance of this old timey rig.

The thing is, in addition to the boom and mast, this rig requires an additional stick of

lumber, the gaff, to gain height of sail. This forms a four sided mainsail instead of the sloop's triangle. It has a throat halyard similar to a sloop but it also has a peak halyard to haul that gaff edge of the sail above the stubby mast. The peak halyard attaches to a sliding wire bridle on the gaff so it can self-adjust to the optimal angle.

If you can believe it, I couldn't find any instruction for proper gaff hoisting on the intertubes and was too proud to ask someone the best way to make sail on such a tiny boat. So it felt like I was inventing the wheel when attempting to fly this classic design.

As best I could figure, when raising the main I have to switch back and forth from raising the throat halyard to the peak halyard so as to keep the gaff fairly level so it doesn't slide on that damn bridle and come crashing down. How could I do that while standing in a couple feet of water with one hand holding the boat into the wind? Hmm, it made my heart beat faster thinking about it.

So, got my lunch order, had a few forkfuls of tasty fried fish and hit the road, munching fried potatoes like a savage as I drove. When I arrived at the ramp I was cheered that there was a parking space open but shocked to see how low the tide was already. Well, if there wasn't enough water to splash it, I'd just have to hang around and wait for it to come back in, yeah, but I would crazy hate burning up the afternoon waiting for that. Probably give me a heart attack right there.

While I've mostly been self employed in physical work that rewards efficiency of movement and task organization, I have yet to get this heinous little sow from trailer to sailing in under an hour and a half and know I can do better. With the tide dropping I set to work in earnest, first removing the trailering restraints I use to get her over the mean streets of Boston, then on to setting up the mast and running rigging.

One of the things that attracted me to the gaff sail plan (besides its lineage and looking salty as hell) is that it uses a short mast. Mine was only the length of the trailer, so no overhang while traveling or when storing it in the congested urban area. It is a sturdy stick of solid wood with forestay and shrouds. I can stand beside the boat while it's still on the trailer and, while holding the mast upright with the base about waist high, extend it into the boat and drop it into its support structure. This maneuver is a little ungainly and a sudden gust of wind could be a problem. But not today.

When I was ready to launch, I put on my flimsy "surf shoes," and walked down the ramp into the water for a final check, only to find there weren't but one foot of water for what looked like a weirdly long ways out. Dang! Having nothing better to do than give it a try, I backed the trailer in as far as possible while not leaving the minivan's front-wheel drive on sand and seaweed to avoid having to call a tow truck. When I had it positioned as best as possible, I got out to observe my boat, of course, sitting way high and dry on the trailer.

I had spent the winter pumping iron at a gym and it wasn't to get ripped. No, it was for situations like this where this knobby old guy was going to somehow manhandle 400lbs of boat off the trailer. I managed to do it by lifting and shoving from the bow while standing on the trailer tongue, then wading out to pull and waggle from the stern. Back and forth. I had never seen such a lubberly per-

formance at a boat ramp, and apparently the locals never had either as spectators stopped to watch.

Once off, the boat floated handily in the skinny water and I was pleased to learn it can be launched into a mud puddle. I walked it over to an opportune spot where I hauled the stern up on the beach. I mounted the kicked-up motor but, as anticipated, no way the rudder was going on. Regarding the mainsail, I found leaving it attached to the gaff and boom was helping to speed up mounting them. Next I hanked on her proud little jib. In theory and pictures, I love this rig!

In a possible strategic error I didn't raise the sails from the stability of the beach as I feared that when I walked it out far enough to mount the rudder (for which I would need both hands and maybe 15 seconds) the boat might be too lively from the windage of luffing sails for me to line up the hardware. And what if the sails were up and the boat fell off the wind while I fumbled with the rudder and it sailed away without me as the main sheet would surely snag on something? It could go on to become the Ghost Ship of the Sakonnet. Years later, on misty nights, people would claim to have seen it shoot the narrows of the Stone Bridge ruins.

After an hour and a half, sure 'nuff, all was in readiness. I pushed the boat from the stern and found it surreal that I had to go out over 20 yards to find knee deep water. To my relief, I fixed the partly kicked up rudder to the transom on the first try. Now I only had to get the sails up, give it a mighty shove on port tack to avoid fouled water to the south, clamber over the side, get the centerboard down as much as possible and sheet in the sails.

If I walked the boat into deeper water I'd increase the difficulty of climbing aboard AND risk soaking my short pants. However, if it were too shallow to get enough centerboard down to work off this lee shore, I'd just float lamely down on Fogland Beach.

I thought of a plan to cover the possible humiliation of toiling away all this time to only drift a few hundred yards and fetch up amongst the swimmers and sunbathers who will be observing my antics, jump out of the boat with a dashing grin and a jaunty laugh, "Haha! Always wanted to sail over to this beach!" Then rip off my shirt, lie down on the sand and contemplate why I continue with the sport of sailing.

Undaunted though, I held the bow into the wind while using the other hand to slowly raise the mainsail, hauling a bit on one halyard, cleating it off, then repeat with the other halyard. But lines kept getting fouled as the boat pranced around, forcing me to let it down, clear the lines and start over. The recent addition of a topping lift had me searching for the right sequence. Twice while trying to straighten things out the boat got sideways to the wind, making for a clumsy struggle. Evidently the locals aren't used to seeing sailors have this kind of fun as more of them stopped to watch.

At some point I realized I might not be able to raise the sails in these conditions and thought maybe I could set the anchor while I straightened things out. But for that I'd have to get in the boat, dig it out of the cuddy, uncoil the line, deploy it and get it to set before I was right back up on the beach again.

Abruptly fear cracked into my confidence. My internal oddsmaker had shifted over to now betting this venture was going down in ignominious defeat. Anxiety shiv-



Ready for Boston's expressway crossing. All other gear is loaded inside the minivan. The boom and the gaff fit in just so, right up to the dashboard.



Boat ramp in the middle background. Must be close to dead low tide. Fogland Beach in the background. The ugly and heavy outboard in position for possible self rescue. Note the logbook shows no internal combustion was used this day.



Turned back well before Sakonnet Point by wave action built up from the open fetch and prevailing wind over the last of the ebb tide. When I put the helm over, Surfin' USA!

Very pleased with how the gaff rig with a jib works to windward for a shorty centerboard dink.



ered me timbers as I stood clueless in the majestic Sakonnet holding a lively boat with its fouled up rig slatting back and forth, two sheets to the wind.

I cast my mind back a few hours ago to when I ate a half teaspoon of a certain baked bud and found I was now peaking on plant based neural transmitters. Perhaps attempting improvisational boating in an altered state was not a good idea. One hears reports of drowning deaths from small boats all season long. But those reports seem to mostly involve alcohol, which is not my bag. With my brain chemistry, I have found in this wily weed a particular expansion of neural circuitry. Unseen doors can be revealed, which may be why it's repressed.

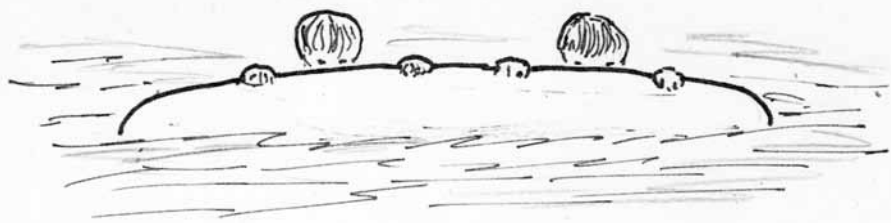
However, if I'm under the influence of an herb and want this outing to have any chance of success, I'm going to have to be like a stoned Chicago Blues musician, so attuned to his guitar he never misses a note. It was time for me to get attuned to my boat and get outward bound and that's what I did, aided by what decades of sailing have taught me about patience and self reliance, for which I needed much schooling.

And hell, it's only a 12' boat. Possibly too involved to even curse, I continued puzzling it out until I was finally away. The onlookers were well entertained by my novel boating. As the sails filled lifting me to windward and I composed my shaky self at the tiller, I think one guy yelled out, "Hey, knucklehead, when you comin' back? I want to make popcorn and bring the wife."

Ah well, one has to be prepared to set a lonely course outside the safety of the group to be the tribe's shaman or fool. It is a fine line. With altered perception, I sailed into the deep aloneness, a disciple of the wind and gaff, withdrawing from the noise of the world, immersing in the mysteries where the sky meets the water in a wee ship. Steeped in all its grandeur like a little tea bag, we sailed till dusk circumnavigating the Sakonnet River, presenting the steadfast gaff profile to all onshore.

If I do what I'm supposed to do, this boat is a lovely performer. I think about more simple old working sailing rigs like the sprit and the lug, but would they sail so weatherly?





Canoeing with Boy Scouts

By Hugh Groth

It is my opinion, and the opinion of many, that the best of the Boy Scout organization is found in camping and all that goes with it, where outdoor skills and people skills can be put to the test, maybe learning a bit in the process. As Scoutmaster of an active camping troop I was always on the lookout for some new adventure for the boys, something that would be fun, make them feel they had accomplished something difficult and maybe slip in a little learning.

Going to summer camp before ever attending a Boy Scout troop meeting is the way I began as a boy, and the camping and especially the canoeing at that first summer camp is what kept me interested. We needed to add a canoe trip to a weekend campout for our troop. For some of them, at least it, would be a new experience.

Some might be surprised to find that Ohio is an excellent state for low to moderate skill paddle sports. There are many rivers that run north to Lake Erie and many more that run south to the Ohio River. The line of demarcation between the Lake Erie Basin and the Ohio River Basin runs right through Richfield where we live, though it is by no means a straight line. However, this means we tend to be near the headwaters of a great number of rivers, which also means we have access to waterways that are not so good for motorboats and are more scenic and cleaner than they are further downstream. Here they are smaller streams but it still takes a bit of skill to navigate them.

About an hour south of us is one of those streams, the Kokosing River, one of the best rivers in Ohio for clarity and cleanliness. While it is not deep, it is also not fast and has only a few gentle rapids, yet it is fast enough to be fun and it flows through a relatively unpopulated area. I knew the Scouts would like it. I made arrangements with Millwood Camp & Canoe, we assembled the troop on a Saturday morning and by mid morning we were at the canoe livery. We would be bused with our rental canoes to where the river flows through the town of Gambier. Then we would canoe downriver to our starting point at the livery where we would camp overnight in a special area we had reserved. It was not a long trip, but it would be a good beginning.

The scouts paired off, two in a canoe, the youngest ones each with one of the leaders. I was not one who had ever capsized a canoe and was not fond of the idea, so I did my best to gently advise the young Scout in the front seat of my canoe as to what to do. The day went well, and when the canoes became widely separated after our lunch on the river, it did not concern me. Many of the canoes were out of sight ahead of mine, but there were other adults along to help ensure that the boys were safe. Some of the boys, taking

advantage of the warm sunshine, took time partway along for a brief swim in the cold water. Finally we came near to our take out and I was still dry, even with my canoe carrying a novice Scout in the front. We rounded the final bend and there at the landing was the rest of the troop, in the river, waiting for me.

The rivers of east central Ohio twist and turn as they find their way downstream for eastern Ohio is hilly, actually the foothills of the Alleghenies. The Kokosing, designated as a state scenic river, is a small river which changes direction constantly as it finds its way around the hills, eventually joining the Mohican to form the Walhonding, which, in turn, joins the Tuscarawas to form the Muskingum. Most of the rivers in the region add their waters to the mighty Muskingum as it flows down to the Ohio River. The Kokosing was fun, but in a couple of years we were looking for something bigger, like maybe the Tuscarawas.

Again I reserved canoes and camping space for a river trip, this time down the Tuscarawas. The canoe livery would ferry us upstream, then we would paddle down and camp at the livery's campground as before. We were going a long way upstream this time and we found the Tuscarawas to be a fairly deep, slow and muddy river. It would be an all day trip.

The troop divided itself into groups of two per canoe for the river trip. There were five adults along, but this time the boys definitely did not want to be in a canoe with an adult. Mostly they did not want to be paddling with their dads, my son included, so he and his close friend Jon paddled a canoe together. The consequence was that Jon's dad and I also paddled together, which was fine with me.

Most of the Scouts did a fairly good job of paddling a canoe, but there were two who seemed to be having a big problem. They were younger scouts and good friends, both large for their age, but ability, judgment and maturity do not necessarily come with size. The two both paddled furiously first on one side of the canoe, banged into the riverbank, backed up, then both of them paddled forward on the other side until they smacked the opposite bank. They were not making much progress and soon were falling behind. Joe and I watched this from our canoe, trying in vain to help until we stopped for lunch along the muddy bank of the river.

While we ate lunch a small black Lab puppy appeared, apparently from the nearby farm, and charmed the boys as they ate. He wiggled and splashed in the river and begged food from all the Scouts. The Scouts and the puppy seemed to become very fond of each other in a short time.

After lunch Joe suggested that we split up and each take one of the boys that we had seen having a problem. I agreed they needed help and gave Joe the choice of which boy to take. I knew these boys better than Joe did and was quite happy with his choice of the one I did not really want in my boat. We soon were ready to head on down the river and, in another questionable choice Joe got into the front of the canoe as he had been with me. As they pulled away from the bank the puppy jumped into the river and started swimming after them. The young Scout in the back of Joe's canoe saw it and panicked. He was sure the dog would drown so he quickly turned around and lunged for the pup. Joe had no warning and never saw it coming. Over the canoe went, dumping both Joe and the Scout into the muddy Tuscarawas, both of them going completely underwater.

They came up sputtering, got to shore and emptied the canoe, but as they got back in to continue their journey the Scout insisted that they "rescue" the dog, even though it could obviously swim far better than he could. On they went, a wet dad, a wet Scout and a happy but wet dog. To this day I still hear a good natured "you knew, and you still let me take that kid" whenever I see Joe and the subject of Scouts comes up.

As the afternoon wore on the sky darkened, the wind started to blow and rain began. Behind us there were two dads in a canoe, also together because their sons had paired up to be away from adults. The dad in the back heard a crack from overhead, looked up, then hollered "paddle" and stroked hard. With that a large tree fell into the river right behind them, narrowly missing the canoe. Later we heard that a small tornado had touched down just a few miles from where we were paddling.

We all finally got back to the canoe livery, tired and wet and with a small, black puppy tagging along and generally bugging us. We had no way of knowing where the farm was that the dog belonged to, and did not know what to do next. We talked to the livery owner, who was no help, except to say that we had better not leave the puppy there. Later a police car pulled through the campground and again we got no help.

We set up camp, did a little fishing and wondered what to do about the dog. Next morning we packed up, tied the pup to a tree in the campground and took off. We felt that there was a good chance that he would be reunited with his owner if he stayed in the area and we had no business taking him with us. Trying to find the owner on our own was out of the question for we had no idea where to start. We didn't even know which road the farm might be along. It could take all day and still not work out.

Off we drove, with the livery owner running down the drive after us, hollering and waving her fist. She knew what we had done. I do hope things worked out for the puppy, but needless to say, I have not been back to find out.

The Scouts who were along on the Tuscarawas trip are all beyond scouting age by several years now. The troop has been on canoe trips since, but never again on the Tuscarawas. They have been on the Allegheny in Pennsylvania, to Killarney Park in Canada and to the Upper French River in Ontario. I have not been part of these trips so I have only secondhand knowledge of how they went, but Troop 387 continues to enjoy canoeing.

One fall we planned to canoe the Clarion through Cook's Forest State Park in Pennsyl-

vania. It had been a wet year so the canoe livery expected that the river, which is normally low at the time of year we planned to go, would have plenty of water. We reserved a campsite in the park and planned our trip.

We arrived at the park and set up camp in a group campsite. As I registered at the park office I noticed that not only did the river have enough water, the normally placid, clear Clarion was high, muddy and rolling, nearly up to the underside of the bridges. I went to the livery and was told that the river then was too high for canoe trips that day, but if there was no rain overnight the river would likely recede by morning. We had planned to leave at 8am for our canoe ride. It rained a drizzly rain all night.

When we got to the river in the morning it was not lower but higher. The livery would not rent to us before the owner made a judgment about safety. He felt the river was dangerous so we said we would be back around noon for another try. We would be happy with a somewhat shorter trip if it meant we could go.

At noon the livery owner decided that since we had an adult in every canoe, he would allow us to do the shorter trip even though the water level was still very high. However, he wanted us out of there and on our way up the river on the shuttles so other potential customers would not see us. So we went, with at least one adult in each canoe (there were a lot of adults along on this campout) and paddled very carefully in half the normal time back to the livery, thanks to the swift current. We all felt very brave and daring, for we found that no livery on the river, including ours, had let out any more canoes that day.



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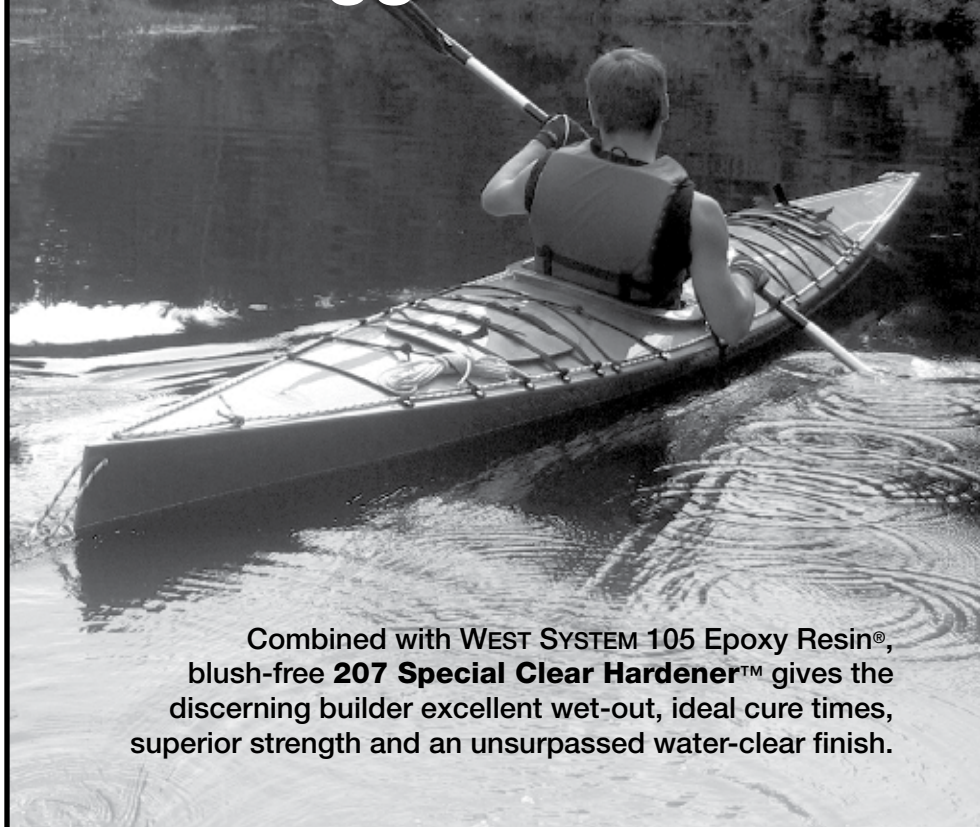
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Photo by Bill Ling

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I am a big fan of *MAIB*, faithful subscriber and reader of almost every article. I'm very grateful to all those in the *MAIB* community who submit such fascinating and wide ranging material. Although I'm a small boat builder and sailor I haven't, until now, quite seen how I could contribute to *MAIB*. But when I was recently cleaning out my mother's house and came across the following, I knew immediately that I had found something to share with *MAIB* readers.

Here's the story. My cousin, Henry Dale, has done a lot of genealogic research on our family. Among other things, he has transcribed the diaries of an ancestor, one George Branner English, a merchant engaged in trade between Philadelphia and Great Britain. Born in Philadelphia in 1807, he married Harriet Helen Stone in 1842. The following letter was written to his wife:

"Ship *West Point* at sea, 27th April 1848. Latitude 46:40, Longitude 23.

My dearly beloved one, although this letter will travel one thousand miles eastwardly before it will be on its way to return to you, I cannot at this time refrain from pouring out a few thoughts from an overflowing heart of love, to one who so dearly loves me, with a few incidents of our voyage thus far at sea.

I now speak of the 26th of April (yesterday) at which time we saw many vessels, all bound west, and supposed by the captain to be on their way to Canada for lumber. I was then deeply impressed that some accident would befall us that night and cautioned the second mate to keep a bright lookout that otherwise we should run into a vessel tonight.

His answer was, "I hope not," and went on to relate the accident that occurred to him some years ago. On the 9th of April on board ship *United States* owned by R. Burton of Philadelphia and bound to that port, they ran into a large iceberg and carried away their mainmast, foremast, bowsprit, jib boom etc. and making them a complete wreck.

They erected, as soon as possible, a jury mast and sailed for a more southern latitude, where the winds were light and entirely out of the way of the ice. They did not arrive for nearly 70 days. Other ships leaving England 20 and 30 days after her had arrived and, not being able to report her, she was given up as lost. On their arrival the insurance office was so pleased with the management of captain and sailors that they presented the captain with a silver mug and gave each of the sailors \$25.

Last evening the captain and I were talking in the cabin until the clock struck eleven, then bidding each other good night we retired. I fell asleep about 25 minutes before twelve. My afternoon fears were too soon to be realized. A few minutes before twelve at night the barque called the *Cove of Quebec* ran into us crossing our bows. She was sailing before the wind at the rate of about nine miles the hour, and we by the wind at about five miles the hour. The collision was tremendous. The crash cannot be described. It awoke me. Mr. Rowan, the Minister of Naples came to my stateroom and told me we were wrecked.

I dressed myself and went upon the deck. The captain, with the following words, met me and said, "Here we are, a wreck." I must say I had great presence of mind in this emergency, notwithstanding the loud cries from those on the *Cove*, "Lay to, we are sinking."

The confusion cannot be described upon our own ship. It is said our watch sang out, "ship ahead, helm down hard up", in time to allow the second mate to run aft and get a lan-

1848 Collision at Sea An Eyewitness Account

By George Branner English
Submitted by David Kriebel

tern which he held out some time before we struck. The impression is their watch, if any, did not see us until very near. Then the man at the wheel being suddenly alarmed put their helm up also, bringing her across our bows. If he had kept the helm as he had it when we were first discovered they would have gone all clear.

The night was not dark but there were occasional black clouds. They tore away our jib boom, pulled out and broke many large iron bolts, destroyed our bow and the figure of Washington, turned over one of our large anchors weighing nearly two tons, damaging us in all about one thousand dollars.

We made a total wreck of her. Our bowsprit went across her deck between the fore and main mast and sweeping away everything before it clean with the deck at one stroke. Her main and mizzen masts and sails went overboard and, melancholy to relate, at the same time the man at the wheel, the watch, and first mate, and all three were drowned, the wind was high and sea rough. Not a vestige of anything left aft of the foremast, the bulwark, stanchions and everything swept from the deck.

She went fast astern of us and in a few minutes was almost out of sight, nothing seen but her light occasionally, as she would rise upon the waves upon the verge of the horizon.

Our ship was immediately ordered to lay to, and all hands engaged for the first few hours endeavoring to repair damages, make fast many braces connected with the foremast, as many fears were entertained that it would fall. Our pumps were put in motion, the bow of the ship completely illuminated by the light of our lanterns used in its repairs.

When everything was secured, we lost sight of the wreck's light for one hour, and concluded ship and all hands had gone down. At this moment I was very anxious and excited with regard to the fate of those on board of her, I remained on deck with the captain all night, occasionally assisting him in pulling at ropes and burning blue lights etc. The moon shone occasionally through the black clouds most brilliantly. Not even her bright light could dispel the gloom and doubt in our minds. Then all was dark upon the waters and every anxious eye was stretched to the uttermost to the verge of the horizon all round, no ship or light to be seen.

The captain now ordered the ship to be put about and made sail towards the direction where the wreck's light was last seen. We were soon up to the very spot where he thought she must be. But nothing was to be seen but the boisterous waves. Imagine the gloom that pervaded every one of us.

At last the dawn of the day opened to our view, upon the very verge of the horizon, the long lost wreck. What a sight to behold, what a total wreck, a mere shell, with 14 living souls on board. The want of sails made her roll dreadfully and with great difficulty the poor fellows clung to the wreck.

At four o'clock we were alongside of her and, in consequence of the mismanagement of the man at our wheel, the wreck came smash against our side, injuring our

small boat, hurting the bulwarks, stanchions etc. Our captain then asked what they wanted us to do. They said take them off.

Our small boat was then let down and two sailors put into it. They went near the wreck but found the sea was running too high to approach nearer without risking their own lives and advised the captain and crew to jump overboard. One at a time they would pick them up. The captain declined and our boat returned.

About four hours after they managed to get their long boat over the side of their wreck but they had no oars, having been washed overboard during the night. Our boat was again ordered down, manned with four sailors and our second mate, a brave and noble fellow from Pennsylvania, the same who was wrecked by the iceberg. One of the ship's life preservers was thrown into the boat and away they went and remained near the wreck until the captain, two passengers and eleven sailors jumped into their long boat.

Then our mate threw a rope to them and our jolly sailors rowed them in safety alongside of our noble vessel. But even then we had great difficulty in getting them all on board safely. Some were obliged to be hoisted up with a rope round their waist, so frightened they could not stand,

All safely on board, their long boat was then cut adrift and our ship put on her course for Liverpool. It was to me a happy moment until I heard following report. The worst is not yet told, they left a sick man in the forward cabin of the wreck. They said he could not live long, that his lungs were gone and they had expected his death the day before. They also said he could not be got upon the deck without killing him. Also two fine dogs left to starve to death, unless the ship sinks before that period arrives.

At 9 o'clock a.m. we had the fourteen all on board safe. The captain lost everything, clothes, money, charts, nautical instruments etc. Passengers lost everything also.

Thus endeth the last important incident of my life thus far and we are now on our way to Liverpool with fair wind and prospects. Shall write again in a few days.

George Branner English"

Postscript: George Branner English lived for many more years, dying in New York City in 1883 at the age of 76. But this was not the only time that he and his wife were touched by tragedy at sea, six years after this collision, his wife Helen's father, mother and one sister were returning from England on the *SS Arctic* when it collided with another ship off the coast of Newfoundland. Two hundred and thirty seven passengers were lost, including Helen's family. There were only 21 survivors.



On May 2, Melissa and Richard came to Holyoke with their truck. Next thing we knew, the loaded boat was trailing behind that truck down the street toward Connecticut. A few minutes after that Suzanne and I, with our wonderful helper Amanda, were off in the van, all of us headed for the boat ramp in Deep River, Connecticut, about an hour's drive south of Holyoke. In the parking lot at the Deep River town ramp the last bits of stuff went in the boat and the masts went up.



Suzanne and Richard, mainmast going up.

Richard and Melissa finish stepping the mainmast.



Sailing *Auklet* 2015 Launch: One More Time!

By Shemaya Laurel
ShemayaLaurel@yahoo.com



Warren had been busy processing honey and brought one of the frames with the last bits left in it, big treat! Amanda and I settled in the cockpit, Melissa drove the trailer into the water and when the boat floated free we used the little electric motor to back out into the Connecticut River. The tide was high around 1100, just before we did this, so the current was slack and the breeze calm, making it easy to maneuver the 200 yards to our destination. By ten minutes later we were snug at Warren's dock.

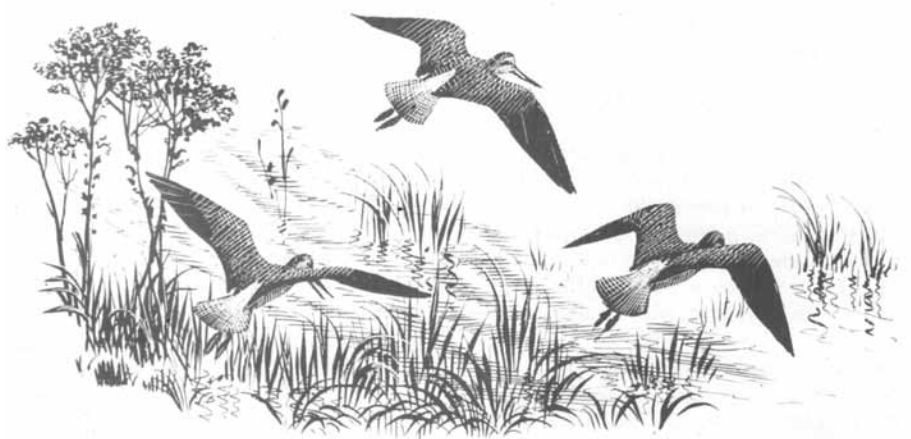


The forward rake of the mainmast, especially noticeable in these two pictures, has to do with the junk rig and helping the mainsail swing out when running downwind.

In a couple of days Amanda and her sister will be back to help with the rigging, I expect to be here for a week or so getting things in order. It's a beautiful spot and this early in the season there's not too much traffic, even with this lovely bit of warm, sunny weather. Leaves are just barely starting to come out, but the flowering bushes and trees in town were beautiful on the way in, farther along than anything at home in Holyoke.

This year's departure has been different from previous ones. I spent most of the winter sorting, giving away and making a dent in packing the remainder of the somewhat ridiculous collection of stuff in my apartment. If all goes something like according to plan, this time next year will see a spring launch in Maine. In the meantime, it's lovely to be floating so early in the season and I'm looking forward to watching the leaves come out and gradually working my way north.

Many thanks to Amanda and Suzanne for the photos!



Environment

Five years after the BP oil explosion (and don't call it a spill) wildlife is still struggling along the Gulf Coast. Bottlenose dolphins are dying at a rate four times faster than before the environment was despoiled. Mahi mahi, snapper, white and brown pelicans and coral heads are dying. Laughing gull population is down 32%. 30,000 to 60,000 Kemp's ridley sea turtles died because of the oil according to the National Wildlife research. Although BP said it had set aside \$50 billion to deal with the problems, loss of habitat, job loss, etc., the money has been hard to find. NBC news research indicated that only a fraction of the promised funds have been available.

Restaurants from New Orleans to Tampa have complained about the oil effects on fish, however, BP says there is no dietary problem with the sea life. BP also countered that the National Wildlife Federation, the impacted states' governments and the Obama administration are trying to use BP to gain money for their own wildlife agenda. This winter is the first time in five years that tar balls from the explosion are not evident on each beach in the Gulf.

For the record, 2014 was a record profit for BP. Every year since the explosion BP cited a growing gross profit except 2010. Only Chevron and Total S.A. made more money than BP. Oil always seems to triumph over nature.

A TV TED talk about whale poop opened a whole world of understanding about oceanic ecology. Whale poop is quite different than other mammals as it is a large cloud or fog of excrement that is red in color and heavily fortified with iron. It tends to rise to the top, creating a veritable current that means that surface material is stirred up and sinks, feeding a plethora of creatures but most importantly, krill. This action, called a Whale Pump, is essential for all sea life. Plankton that feeds on the fecal matter absorbs over two billion tons of CO₂ from the water annually. Dolphin poop alone is the primary food for 12 different species of fish in the Atlantic.

The Southern oceans are particularly nutrient rich with many minerals and inorganic products but incredibly poor in iron. Whale excrement provides that necessary element for a balanced ecology. Interesting (at least to me) is that 12,000 sperm whales alone extract over 200,000 million tons of CO₂ from the sea.

Ecologists have begun to examine whale poop as a check on the overall ecological welfare of the oceans. Certain ingredients indicate quantity and quality of whale food, i.e., fish. One oceanic research laboratory even trained a dog to look over the seawater and indicate whale poop. Quite apparently whale poop is an essential component of our ecology and existence.

For the record there are only so many words to describe excrement without being slightly crude. My online thesaurus provides no other words to use except poop and excrement. Kaka doesn't seem quite right and the usual unofficial US Naval terms are inappropriate. Do the kind readers have any suggestions?

Gray Fleet

The Navy announced that the USS *Peleliu* (LHA 5) would be decommissioned and placed into reserve. This auxiliary landing ship is a virtual small aircraft carrier carrying dozens of helicopters capable of hauling 1,000 Marines to assault targets. The ships



Beyond the Horizon

By Stephen D.
(Doc) Reagan

are equipped with six surgical suites, a couple of dental suites and a fully functional 25 bed "hospital" where the wounded or sick can be handled. One WWII Corpsman stated that LHAs would have saved hundreds of lives in that conflict where this level of treatment was unavailable.

As the LHA ships have been scrapped, sunk or sold, some critics maintain that they should be passed on to FEMA for emergency services in time of catastrophic events such as Hurricane Katrina. With sleeping and mess capabilities for over a thousand people, sophisticated communications equipment, hospitalization and surgery suites, a helicopter landing flight deck and hanger deck for chopper service and repair, the LHA could easily be the primary focal point for emergency services. Volunteers, FEMA personnel, police, Red Cross, etc., could all be centered in one facility that could also be the initial recovery center for rescued people.

LHAs also could be the primary food preparation site for thousands of people. Additionally equipped with generators, emergency equipment (tents, cots, blankets, pre-packaged food, etc) and appropriate radios, LHAs would be the hubs around which all medical, housing, policing, communications, rescue and feeding could revolve.

These ships are fully functional except their armaments are outdated, communications equipment are not up to current military standards and they can no longer fit a mission for the Navy. With minimal repair and upgrading, these vessels would be a great addition to FEMA at very little cost. FEMA could place one on the East Coast, one in the Gulf, one on the West Coast and one in the Great Lakes so that these could be along any seaport area within a day. Or we could make razor blades from them.

Although not a nautical issue, recent statements by Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus allow a peek at the future of carrier warfare. He recently stated that the acquisition of the F-35 would be the last human piloted Navy fighter plane. Noting the rapid evolution of unmanned UAVs, he claims that fighters operated from afar by pilots with joysticks sitting comfortably at desks will be significantly better than manned jets. He further conjectures that such planes will be cheaper, easier to operate, subject to less human decision making, to say nothing of safer for pilots.

Carrier task forces are highly resource expensive. Not only does the carrier itself require over 3,000 personnel, the relatively unprotected ship requires destroyers, cruisers, supply ships, oilers and submarines for it to operate effectively and efficiently. The current 11 carrier task groups are the absolute minimum needed for worldwide coverage, so says the Navy.

The prospect of UAVs taking over the Navy's aviation mission could mean a significant reduction in personnel and support ves-

sels. Coupled with unmanned submarines, mine sweepers, etc., the number of requisite sailors may diminish greatly. Science fiction isn't so much fiction anymore.

The Navy announced that two Landing Craft Ships (LCS), the largest aviation platforms other than carriers, would be stationed in Singapore on a 3-2-1 schedule. This means a rotation of three crews manning the ships, two crews on board and one stateside. The Navy gave no specific reasons for using Singapore as a homeport but China's continuing expansion into the South Pacific cannot be overlooked.

Pirates

The Navy announced on May 1, 2015, that they would now provide cover for merchant ships through the Horn of Hormuz because of the constant threat from radical Islamic groups targeting commercial vessels. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy boats seized the Maersk ship *Tigris* and took it to Iran's port at Bandar Abbas. The Navy's Central Command has several ships in the area to protect shipping including destroyers, minesweepers and guided missile cruisers.

The Maersk ship *Kensington* was also attacked by the IRGCN earlier in the week. The IRGCN is not an element of the Iranian Navy but controlled by the radical Islamists within Iran and other Middle East nations. With China pushing the envelope the Navy finds itself covering a lot of sea lanes along the eastern Mediterranean and western Pacific Rim.

Rescue

A 37 year old sailor, whose 35' boat partially sank after flipping over, survived approximately 66 days at sea sitting on the remaining part of the hull above the surface. A German freighter off the coast of North Carolina rescued him and the Coast Guard airlifted him to a hospital where the seafarer was declared fit. The man had been living aboard his boat in South Carolina when he told his friends he was heading out to sea for a couple of days of fishing. That was January 23. No one heard from him since. Evidently bad weather had smashed out his ports and he quickly filled with water, however, internal floatation managed to keep the bow sticking up in the air. He rationed himself to one pint of water per day, ate fish that he caught and salvaged a modest amount of food from the boat.

The Coast Guard had been notified of his missing status in January and launched a ten day search and rescue operation without success. They were shocked when notified that he had been found after such a lengthy time. Even more surprisingly, he did not suffer dehydration, sunburn or other ailments but the intrepid man thinks he broke a shoulder when the boat turned turtle.

In spite of blowing his whistle and signaling the German ship, he remained unnoticed until he waved his flag upside down. The Germans immediately initiated a rescue and notified the Coast Guard. The victim was healthy and walked to shake hands with the skipper. He was hardly out of the shower when a rescue helicopter airlifted to shore.

Fifty six fishermen died when a Russian trawler fishing in the Okhotsk Sea collided with an iceberg and sank dumping another 63 crewmen into the frigid waters. Thirteen fishermen were still missing in spite of Russian efforts to rescue them. Officials stated that

the trawler was horribly under ballasted by a factor of five. Very tender and unstable it sank quickly while towing 80 tons of fish and nets. The ship should have been carrying at least 250 tons of fuel but only had a fraction of that and it did not add water to compensate for the lack of ballast.

A ferry of immigrants from the North African coast sank with over 700 on board, most of whom were drowned. Many were locked in the hold by smugglers who were bringing them into Italy illegally. The massive influx of people attempting to flee war-stricken Islamic countries is causing significant complaints from European nations. The Catholic Church itself is torn between its desire to provide relief for the war victims, especially Christians who are sorely subjected to horrific cruelty, and its comprehension of the problems Italy and other nations have attempting to handle large numbers of people with different customs, languages, behavioral styles, foods, traditions and everything else a culture possesses.

The Church, under Popes Benedict and now Francis, has been vocal in its criticism toward richer nations being less than munificent with these immigrants. Both Popes have pointed their remarks especially at the United States and the European Union. The Church is now heavily populated with Africans and South Americans who have become extraordinarily religiously and politically potent. Often referred to as the Southern Church, it has taken on the mantle of social concerns, a leftover from Liberation Theology that died on the vine as being politically leftist, however, the more orthodox theologians have co-opted the social justice mantra. With both the US and Europe being constantly inundated with poor illegal immigrants the looming battle between the Vatican and Washington, to say nothing about the European capitals, has hardly begun.

This ferry disaster of incredible proportions has suddenly raised the stakes in the fight between an exponentially economic spread between the "haves" and the "have nots." American and European Coast Guards have found themselves caught in the middle of trying to save people who may ultimately be deported back to life threatening homelands. Moral dilemmas of this nature were not covered in boot camp or "A" schools.

No sooner than this was written, another batch of illegal immigrants was found at sea attempting to escape North Africa. The Italian Navy brought them ashore for medical treatment, food, water and a prolonged debate about what to do with them. Many were Christians fleeing Islamic terrorist entities.

Weather

The Water Tribe, a group of Florida small boat enthusiasts who participate in a three day race from Fort Desoto near Tampa/St Pete to Key Largo, was waylaid by the Coast Guard this past March. Sailing small craft such as kayaks, canoes and small home-made plywood sailboats, these intrepid sailors ran into very foul weather swamping boats and requiring Coast Guard rescue of several participants. After several emergency calls the Coasties informed the Tribal Hierarchy that this year's voyage was history and that they were sent ashore.

The Texas 200 and the Florida event have run into crummy weather turning fun runs into a floating nightmares. Critics have loudly decried these fairly unrestricted mess-

abouts as dangerous, hazardous and stupid. Fans state that these events are exciting, fun and demanding. No doubt these affairs will continue unabated unless some official entity like the Coast Guard shuts them down. One cynic said "its just natural selection at work." On the other hand, aren't Florida gators fat enough?

Merchant and White Fleets

Sea Breeze, a smaller luxury yacht owned by Windstar, has been totally remodeled at a modest expenditure of \$8.5 million. The ship can handle 212 passengers for Caribbean cruises. Windstar also announced that a sister ship, *Star Legend*, will undergo a \$3 million revamp.

The expansion of the Panama Canal has continued with the setting of the 16th and final lock door. Of note, the initial engineering was so outstanding that the original lock doors and hinges have never been changed.

David McCullough's book, *Path Between the Seas*, offers a great perspective on the building of the canal. His books are invariably good reads but this one is particularly excellent. Unlike the Suez, the Panama had to cope with different water levels at the Atlantic side versus the Pacific side, to say nothing about going over mountains.

The canal has remained a vital element of commercial shipping and is one of the most strategic concerns of North America. The *Iowa* class battleships of World War II were built intentionally (surprise, surprise) with a slender beam capable of barely making it through the canal. The rebuilding of the canal will allow the merchant fleet of monster sized ships passage from one ocean to another. Some component of virtually everything we own has come via the seas.

The entire Panama Canal discussion has opened the possibility of Arctic Ocean passage between northern hemisphere ports. Canada and Russia have been at odds over shipping via the Northwest Passage. The significance of a new and modern Panama Canal eases some of the diplomatic pressure among nations.

MCS launched a USA West Coast Expresses ship that is the second largest container vessel in the world. Months behind schedule because of a labor dispute at the Port of Los Angeles, the ship will make scheduled stops at Oakland, Mexico, Panama, Spain and several calls in Europe including England, the Netherlands and Germany. Size and speed are the objectives of this service.

Maritime Concerns

The Transportation Department's Director of Maritime Administration, Chip Jaenichen, issued concerns about the lack of qualified US mariners. One reporter often uses the phrase, "it's complicated" in his discussions with an editor, and it certainly fits here. Too many of the 21 to 30 year old entry aged men and women are either unfamiliar with the Merchant Marine or feel the rigors of the job are beyond their willingness to endure. Slow promotions, lengthy sea duty, difficulty in maintaining good family life and the normal ups and downs of employment are important drawbacks for the sailing service. Gee, who wouldn't want to serve on a huge ship away at sea for months at a time in an unsafe environment in seas teeming with pirates and working for peanuts?

Future problem projection indicates that in 30 years the US population will increase by 70 million and these citizens will require

45% additional domestic freight volume which our current infrastructure cannot handle. Think of half again as many trucks on our interstates. The nation's water systems offer incredibly important options for cargo movement. We are blessed with two coasts and the Mexican Gulf with good harbors and established ports. Coupled with the Great Lakes, goods can reach a significant level of people via water. The Mississippi, Ohio and regions of other great rivers provide inexpensive and efficient means of transport. A nice afternoon watching towboats pushing 15 barges of grain, coal or LNG through locks on the Mississippi is enough evidence of the massive amounts of floating cargo. Unfortunately, all this requires mariners who are highly trained and skilled. Masters, Chief Engineers and seamen are not created overnight. Like our land based infrastructure, our Merchant Marine recruitment needs attention. Immediately.

A related problem that has two very vocal and politically important sides is the Jones Act that Sen John McCain (R-AZ) is trying to overturn. The current legislation requires that all US port to port transport goods be carried on US flagged ships. Furthermore, these ships must be American made, owned and crewed. McCain's supporters believe this mandate stifles competition, inflates expenses and is inefficient and ineffective. He contends that the restrictions have made rapid shipping impossible.

The Jones Act, actually called the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, has created a major slowdown of shipping due to lack of qualified vessels. Horizon Lines pulling out of domestic hauling exacerbated this issue. Sea Star Lines, Trailer Bridge and Crowley Maritime have filled that void but cannot handle any increase of tonnage. However, the Director of Maritime Administration, Chip Jaenichen, insists that 33 new merchant ships are being built in our 117 shipyards.

Among the proponents of the Jones Act are the ship building and associated unions, the ship builders who maintain that their facet of the economy would collapse without the Act, urban areas along the coasts that are dependent on ship building and the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. The Commandant of the Coast Guard stated that he believes that elimination of current legislation would damage American security.

The opposition stems mostly from the political conservatives backed by the Heritage Foundation. They declare that eliminating the Jones Act would increase competition, lower costs and offer services more effective and efficient than under the Bill. A Heritage Foundation study indicated that elimination of the Jones Act would be good for the economy and undermine the bloated and inefficient maritime unions.

The US Naval Institute and the Navy League of the United States oppose the law's elimination but are cognizant of the concerns raised by Sen McCain. The current maritime bet is that McCain is fighting a lost cause, however this battle has been fought for five years and that indicates a continuation of skirmishes.

20 Mile Build

By Richard Honan



Masking off the interior in preparation for the primer and non skid, cream colored interior paint



Lots of masking off of the bright work.



Applying the primer.

Bow details.



The first week in May I finished the brightwork, the two small decks, bow and stern stems along with the rub rails with a product manufactured by Jamestown Distributors called Total Boat Marine Wood Finish. It's not a varnish, more of a transparent wood sealer with a warm amber tint. Easier to touch up than a traditional varnish. It has a soft satin look to it. I applied it with a foam roller and tipped it with a brush.

The contrasting dark area of the Okoume plywood deck and the light colored cherry bright work is actually the result of a mistake. You'll have to ask me about it. I call it, my "Tuxedo Deck." Next up will be priming and painting the interior (a soft buff color) and exterior (a pale green) of the hull.

One week to go before the Essex River Rowing Race. I'm in the final stretch, six and a half months of construction and the *Anna & Emily* (my granddaughters) is just about complete. Considerable time is spent masking off the areas to be painted and then applying two coats primer and non skid paint to the interior and primer and three coats of a one part urethane finish to the exterior of the hull. Preparation is the key here, sanding (lots of sanding), vacuuming along with wiping the epoxy covered hull with a solvent to remove any wax or oil.

The deck, rub rail and bow stem are two tone warm cherry, the inside of the hull is a cream colored non skid paint and the exterior of the hull is painted Sea Foam (pale green), a one part polyurethane made by Total Boat.

With less than a week to go to the annual Essex River Race, I've finalized the painting. The next few days will be filled with last minute tasks, attaching the oarlocks, attaching the seats, building a footrest and attaching some sort of bow eye. She will be named for my two grand daughters, the *Anna & Emily*.

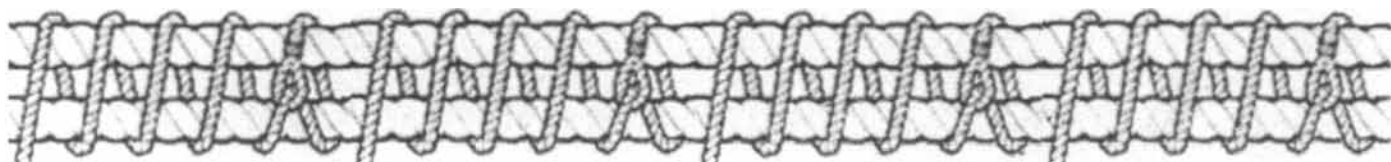


Applying Total Boat non skid cream colored paint to the interior.



Spraying the first of three coats of Sea Foam (pale green), a one part polyurethane made by Total Boat.

"Tuxedo Deck."



First Day on the Water

What a wonderful day May 16 was at the Essex River Row, a six mile race starting across from Woodman's Seafood Restaurant, down the Essex River, to the back side of Cranes Beach and then back up the river to the finish line. It was extra special because after six months of constructing of my Adirondack Guide Boat, this was the baptism, the first day in the water. Joining me on the water were my brother Bill Honan and nephew Matthew W. Honan rowing in my 15' Duck Trap Wherry, the *William & Anthony*.

For me, it was callused hands and a sore tailbone for the day. My rowing was also complicated by the fact that I had to learn a new rowing technique, crossed oars or one hand on top of the other. This took quite a bit of adjustment and is something that I have to become proficient at if I am going to complete 20 miles of rowing in July's Blackburn Challenge.

<http://www.blackburnchallenge.com/Blackburn.html>

The addition of a better footrest and a Camelback water hydration system are two things that would make distance rowing a better experience. And back to more training.



Approaching the turning point around Cross Island.



Heading downriver.



One on one sprint near the finish, looks like I caught him!



A refreshing draft of champagne.

My daughter welcomed me at the finish.



Matt and Bill presented me with a special trophy for my world record number of postings on Facebook.





Looking Around the Museum Yard

The Essex Shipbuilding Museum was again the host site for the Essex River Race, so as I was awaiting the start and having no need to pay attention to the contestants' pre-race meeting, I took a look around the shipyard, which once was the Arthur B. Story Yard that launched hundreds of Gloucester fishing schooners a century ago. Herewith a few photos of what was to be found. It's a great little place to visit if you're on the Massachusetts North Shore this summer, really unassuming.



An apparently private ongoing project is this schooner which apparently flies square sails on her foremast judging from the yards in place.



The *Lewis H. Story* is the Museum's Chebaco Boat pinky schooner "tall ship" built in 1998 by nearby builder Harold Burnham and now undergoing some basic hull rebuilding.



The *Evelina Goulart*, last of the working fishing schooners from the Essex yards not altered for the dude schooner trade, came home to Essex in November 1991 from abandonment in Fairhaven, Massachusetts, through the combined efforts of many, many people. Alas, plans to make her a static display ashore of traditional fishing schooner construction by removing hull planking from one side to reveal her interior have come to naught in the quarter century since, only the shed roof overhead to keep out rainwater to preserve what she was seems to have been affordable.

She wouldn't float anymore so now she's the sign beckoning visitors to visit the Waterline Center building.



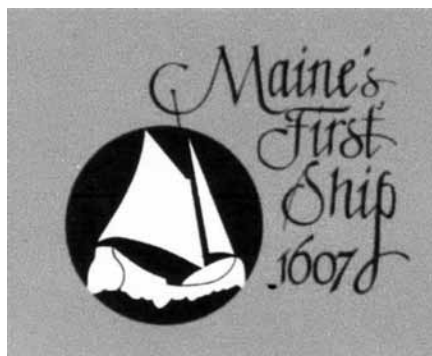
Across from her is this well weathered "project" with convenient access to the interior through an opening cut in the underbody.

Shipyard machinery resides under these shed roofs just like in the "old days" and the surface rust coating the bare metal attests to its spartan accommodations.



Framing Fini!

Virginia's aft frames are up and the final fairing work is ongoing both outside and inside her hull. Vice President Jeremy Blaiklock kneels to adjust a fairing batten portside and President Orman Hines, fairing starboard and forward, recedes into the frames. Anchoring the winter crew, our stalwart shipwright officers have led us through the most brutal winter of the build. Record shattering cold and snow remind us each day, with cruel insistence, what the colonists endured. Three weeks from spring, the sun just begins to clear the south boatshed facade bringing a solar boost to the woodstove. On the days our temps get above freezing the shimming needed to complete the fairing resumes in earnest.



Late Winter Report



Finishing The Frames!

Jeremy stands on staging to fit the top of the final aft frame with RB Omo's help at the tenon end. Taking the pattern outside to check the fit of the finished frame for the port side (center left to right) Aaron Park, Mark Aukeman, Dick Forrest, Roger Barry and Paul Cunningham. Below, the frame is drilled and trunnelled. Roof tar is applied to preserve the tenon end of the raised frame and after final fitting, Dick Forrest drills and trunnels the frame into the sternpost with assist from Paul and Roy Jenkins.





The “Fairest” In The Land

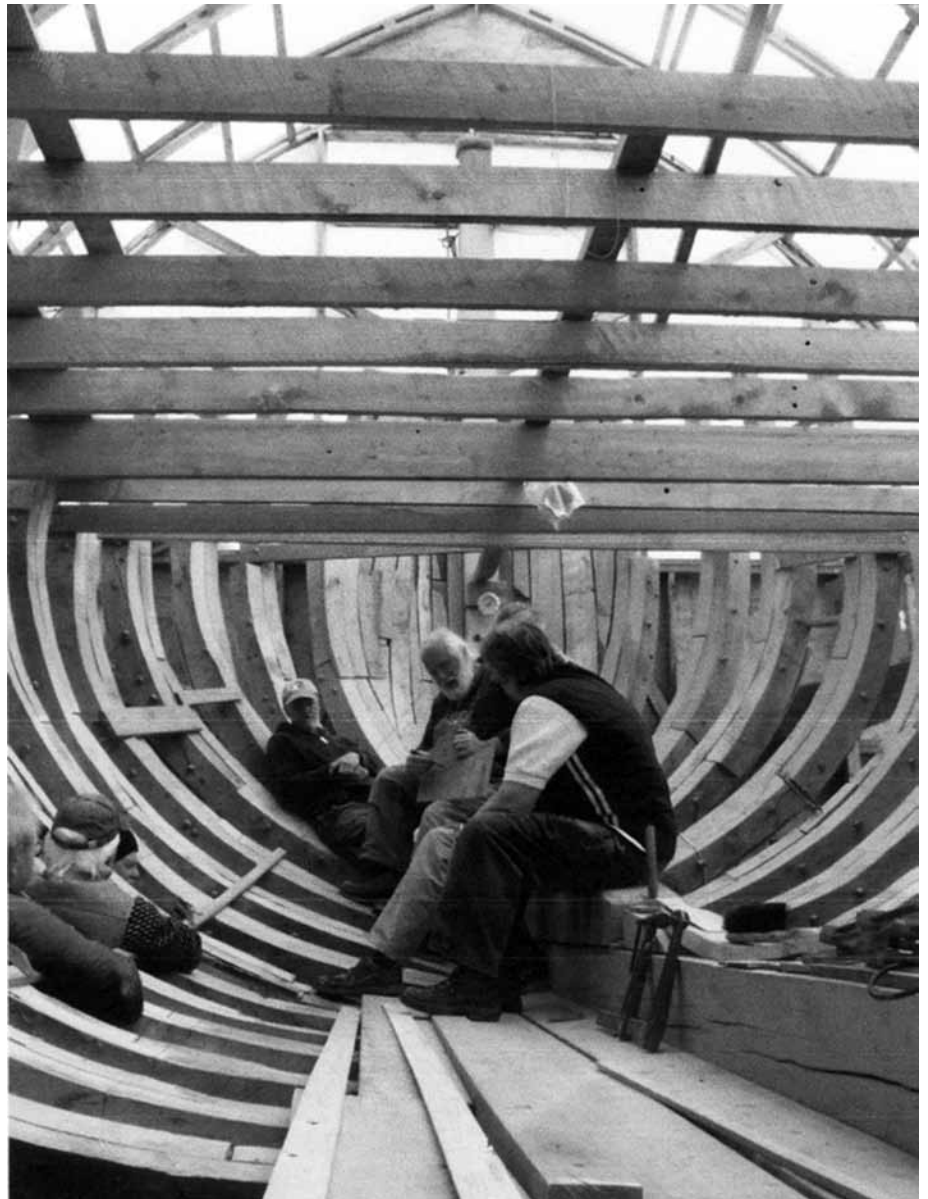
As the fairing stage of construction draws to a close, plans are being made to hand the first planks. The steam jenny and plank steamer box sections were hauled from Rob Steven’s Hermit Island boatshed in preparation for hanging the garboard and the bilge clamp. The garboard runs along the keel and the clamp is an interior plank stabilizing the structure at the bilge, another clamp will be installed at the deck line or sheer. Rob Stevens announced at the recent Vessel Committee meeting that the honor of hanging the first plank goes to Orman for fairing the most hours. Another shout out for port bilge clamp hanging honors goes to Gail Smith, Jim Parmentier and Dana Leonard.



Teaching Moment

Volunteers congregate in *Virginia's* future crew quarters for a learning moment with shipwright Rob Stevens. Gathering both inside and outside the hull, they listen intently while Rob describes the process of installing the bilge clamp planks.

Sketching with a sharpie (on a scrap of luan left over from the pattern molding process) Rob both enlightens and entertains while he creates images that become both tools and coveted souvenirs. This is who we are, giving and receiving. We're volunteers and shipwrights in training. We are *Virginia*.



Planing the Planks!

Firing off the 21" planer for the first time, volunteers work on adjusting the planer supporting rollers and their cooperative techniques. Some planks are so long they slide into the boatshed before they clear the planer, which can't be moved because it would interfere with the gate. Many hands make safe work, wielding 24'x18" oak planks takes a big crew, and they aren't even steaming hot yet, but soon!



The beauty of the HC approach is that one can sample from the smorgasbord of possibility, both in sailing grounds and types of vessel, without the heavy investments of time, money and energy that a fully found vessel can consume. Yet one is much more connected to one's time aboard than in, say, a bareboat charter. Such kits are scalable and can be personalized to many styles of cruising, ranging from open beach cruiser to trade wind sled. Just find a shell!

Bio

I'm just about to turn 44 years of age, was born and raised in and around Toronto. I studied architecture in university but never pursued it beyond that, becoming rather turned off by the profession's narcissistic self obsession, which is pretty ironic seeing as I've ended up involved with a yacht (of all things) which is about as self absorbed as it gets.

I work in the marine biz, so I have a sort of love/hate relationship with boats. It's a career that has afforded me some great opportunities to live in lands far away, but it also sometimes takes the fun out of doing something as simple as going sailing. There are days when the last thing that I want to do is deal with another boat, even if it is my own! I'm shorebound for a while right now, so hopefully that will help to rekindle the passion, to freshen the breeze, in a way.

I've sailed all my life, raced much of it and, being a natural tinkerer, I got involved in production yacht building with the late PDQ Yachts in the late '90s. I started on the shop floor fitting joinery into the boats, but between having a pretty solid boating background and being pretty bright, I quickly moved into a role managing (ack...) the existing and in development sailboat lines and eventually ended up in a role as the president's right hand and acting as a sort of liaison between the engineering, sales and production departments.

I'm now acting as liaison between a customer or marketing group, a designer, builders and a boatyard. The customers know what they want and the designer knows what it should be, then I figure out how and what it will take to build it and then convey that to the hands in the yard. It sounds pretty glamorous and sometimes it even is, but it's mostly a lot of drudgery penning specifications, populating bills of material and scheduling building.

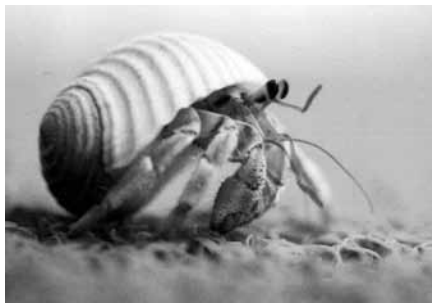
I've built on the beaches in Thailand, in the furnaces of Taiwan, up the river in Argentina, aside the Broads in the UK, down the Eastern Seaboard of the US and most recently in sunny, breezy Western Australia. I took to living aboard out of economy more than anything else. I could afford to keep a home or a boat but trying to keep both was going to be a stretch, so I chose the boat. Doing the kind of work that I do, one or two or three years at a time, demands that I be flexible, unencumbered and mobile, this is reflected in my hermit crab style of boating, and living.

The Hermit Crab Approach

I've taken a cue from the hermit crab. I have a small collection of good "stuff" that I take with me from boat to boat as my situation or locations change. Everywhere in the world I go there are countless almost retired hulls waiting shoreside for me to move in, and they are generally of a type that suits well the local waters. It is easier, and less expensive, to pack my kit in a crate and ship

Hermit Crabbing Another Way to Go

By Michaela Poppleton
Submitted by Dave Zeiger
(triloboats.blogspot.com)



it across an ocean than it is to forever keep a boat that has passage making capability that is only occasionally used to advantage.

Essentially it's a collection of decent and useful gear that I've collected over the years, some of it purposefully bought and some of it scavenged, that lets me move onto just about any boat in the 25' to 35' range without that boat having to be already well fitted and maintained.

It allows me to use (just about) any of the countless, long forgotten hulls that litter the marinas and yards all around the world. I have been involved in the construction of so many of them, an enabler in a way, to the wastefulness. It bothers me, so I find some joy in giving them even a brief bit of care and extended usefulness.

The Boats

None of them are going to be up to making long passages, so I don't get too attached to them and happily leave them behind when I need to move some place new. Cost and effort to restore or renew any of them would be highly unlikely to be recovered, so I minimize my investment, easy come, easy go. I actually put very little effort into any of my own boats because it's the sailing that I love and not the boat, it's about the wind and the water, not the gadgets and brightwork.

When it comes to choosing a boat, I usually let the location do much of the deciding for me. They never need to get me very far from where I already am, so those qualities that make "great cruisers" don't necessarily need to be paramount. It affords me quite a lot of flexibility and freedom.

The estuaries in the UK really cried out for a shallow bellied, tall rigged bilge keeler (which was wood and so full of rot that is sort of "oozed" over the waves!), while in Fremantle I made the most of the perpetually gorgeous sailing conditions and picked up an older generation lightweight racer that wasn't great to live on but absolute bliss to sail. In Toronto I had a C&C Redwing 30 and a Niagara 30 at different times, very different boats but both had decent headroom which made winters bearable. In Argentina I spent the most out of any of them when I found an old German Frers IOR warhorse and proceeded to regularly get it stuck in the mud. It was quite enjoyable to actually meet him at his home and tell him the story.

I like boats that have histories and stories. When they're shiny and new and washed everyday they seem "silent" to me. None of

them have been over \$10,000 to buy and generally they have been around \$5,000 or \$6,000. Reselling at the end is the hard part and could take forever, or even never happen. Having put little in I really don't need to get much back out so I cut my asking price right down to a few thousand dollars and someone usually jumps on it. People are far more likely to buy an old boat that is in the water and being used than they are a boat that has been sitting dry for years or decades. I look at what I spent as my rent for the duration and my return covers the expense to move me and my gear to the next place.

The Kit

I got tired of always dealing with engines and old outboards, so I bought a shiny new 6hp Yamaha one day when I was feeling plush. It is a little undersized at times but the weight savings compared to the 8hp models is enormous and lends me confidence when I'm hefting it on and off of mounts, and it saves 15 kilos worth of freight each time I move.

I have a collection of plastic UNapproved and sized 20L jerry cans, two red for petrol, four blue for potable water and two white for anything else. This way I don't need to rely on integral tankage, and having all of them of equal and manageable size allows them to stack beautifully. I made bicycle panniers that hold one can each side, but I fit them to whatever bike I find locally.

I have a galley box with all of the essential utensils and implements and a single burner MSR multi fuel backpacking stove that happily runs on the same gasoline as the outboard so I only need carry one type of fuel. I have a collapsible charcoal grill at the moment as well which generally (but not always!) gets used shoreside and sometimes with foraged wood.

I use a Sawyer gravity fed water purifier when needed. I'll probably add a composting toilet at some point when I come across a boat that doesn't already have something that is make workable. I have a hefty Whale portable manual bilge pump that so far has (luckily) been used for everything except pumping water out the bilge.

Electrical systems are the hardest part to generalize and need to be dealt with individually. Individually rechargeable lights are always a great solution, though more often than not I manage to cobble something workable together with what's already there. I have considered building myself a box mounted distribution panel and harness "octopus" that I could move from one boat to another (there are really only a couple of layouts used in sailboats in this size range, right?), but again, I've not yet run into a situation where what was already there was a completely lost cause. I like making what I have work.

I bought a used Watt & Sea hydro generator from a guy who was disappointed by its performance (expecting miracles, I suppose) and that has proven fantastic as a source. I take the moorings that nobody else likes because they are in a high current or tidal flow and it happily spins out watts all day and night. I really like the fact that it encourages me to sail more. It starts putting out current at less than two knots of flow but really shines when it has about five, so that does create a practical minimum waterline length on any potential hull. It is also pretty pricey.

I've also got a roll up solar panel that is useful at keeping the anchor light working

when I'm away from the boat or keeping the cell phone and stuff charged. The hydro gen comes with its own controller, as does the solar panel. I let them both operate independently but it is rare that both are ever used at the same time.

All of my navigation kit (software, GPS, etc) is laptop based and I have both wifi and cell boosters. The cell booster isn't completely universal but has worked fine over my past few locations. It probably seems extravagant but my data plan is my connection to the world and lets me work on contracts elsewhere, it's a necessity for work, not for living.

I have an old but oddly reliable Simrad tiller pilot as my extra set of hands, and I generally have enough electricity from the hydro gen to run the pilot and my laptop while sailing along and working from the cockpit all day. I reach off in one direction in the morning and then come about and reach back in for the afternoon. Life is good (sometimes).

I use handheld compass, GPS and VHF, but mostly as safety tools in the event that I go MOB so they are always stashed in my PFD.

Tools. Of course, I've got an assortment of the usual hand tools including fids, needles and a stitching palm that lets me keep old rags useful and earn a few extra bucks when I need to. There is also a bunch of useful bits of rigging that I always take with me, ranging from shackles and blocks to cordage and tape. I organize it all in canvas bags inside of appropriately sized buckets which are always useful to have on hand.

I don't have anything too crazy, partly because I work in and around boatyards so a few bottles of beer and big blue eyes often get things "done" for me.

I have two Japanese styled handsaws because they are light and break down into very little space. I like to whittle, so I have a few knives and gouges and rasps. Spanners, sockets, screwdrivers, allen keys, side cutters, linesman's pliers, caulking gun, rubber mallet, hatchet, sandpaper, paint brushes, scrapers. The outboard came with every tool that is needed for user servicing. It usually all sits in a bucket. None of it is interesting or exciting, but on a boat that doesn't have too much, not much can go wrong nor needs to be fixed.

I avoid power tools, because the electricity common to each of these places varies. There really are very few places where 110-120VAC is used in the world, but I'm still hesitant to commit to 220-240VAC tools (adapting two available 120 receptacles to one 240 line is easy enough) even though I don't have a really good reason why I haven't. Aside from not having had to yet. Toss in the differences in frequency and the chargers of cordless tools get even more limiting.

Fasteners and adhesives. Ziplock baggies full of new and reclaimed screws, bolts, nuts and washers. In bags they all cram down into a very small space and are worth shipping, especially after an Asian stint.

Fibreglass is very easily available so I don't bother and resins have a very short shelf life so they really shouldn't be kept. They would have shipping issues as well, I suspect.

I've always got a tube of silicone and a tube of not too adhesive bedding compound on hand because old boats leak. A lot. I don't ship any of it. I suppose I could figure out at which point a product becomes a candidate for saving and shipping based on weight, but I tend to look at it as partial tubes have such a

short life that they aren't worth going through the hassle of listing, declaring and proving safe to ship. I'm really good at giving things like that away to the next guy.

Shipping the Kit

I don't have a preferred method of shipping my gear, instead trying to make the best use of carriers and agents that we're already using at the boatyard. Using local shipping agents also lets my little and relatively light pallet ship as part of a full consolidated container, though that sometimes means that things take a bit longer to get back into my hands at the other end.

I often use an empty pallet and crate from an engine because they are sturdy and light and let the customs agency that has been getting all of the boat building material into the country figure out how to get my stuff out. I have always had easy access to crates so I've not thought much about what it could be if I were to want it to be reusable. Maybe a two piece dink could be designed to close like a clamshell with everything inside.

It is always surface shipped, as none of the previously fuel containing articles can be shipped by air. The same is true of lithium batteries in many cases, so that needs to be kept in mind. My most recent shipment coming back to Toronto from Perth had a bunch of clothing and "stuff" and weighed in just over 100kg crated and took about a month, door to door, those two points are just about as far apart as is possible on the globe.

General Thoughts

I think a camp cruiser kit is quite viable, with thousands of 20' to 24' boats out there to be had wherever you might be or want to go. There were so many of them built and they are easily and inexpensively had, that buying two just to merge them into a single, slightly better one is an option (especially with scrap lead selling for over a dollar a pound so the discarded keel might help finance other parts of the project). Camping gear is readily available, and so long as one doesn't fall for the marketing it can be very affordable and all fit in the trunk of the car or a broom closet at home. Maybe an all in one kit box that is freight company acceptable might be marketable?

Languages! It makes things interesting, that is for sure. I used to work really hard to learn the local language but have found that most of the official entities and port authorities have provisions in place for dealing with English speakers. Learning the indigenous language makes my day to day life of shopping for vegetables and underwear a lot easier, even if only because I am trying and the locals appreciate that. As far as work goes, I tend to deal largely with fairly well educated people and they have long known that being able to communicate in English is invaluable, so it has made it easier for me. Sometimes, though, there is merit in keeping my mouth shut, my ears open and my comprehension secret.

To Sum Up

Advantages to the way that I approach life afloat? Two advantages, and two reasons:

The biggie: It gets me on the water wherever I might be quickly, as I usually don't have to build or repair much of anything. I hand over an envelope with a bit of cash, shake hands, check the through hulls, paint the bottom and go.


The fun: It lets me pick a boat that suits the waters that I will be in and the type of sailing that I will be doing, even if that might sometimes be dock bound. I can afford to be a bit frivolous and try out something different if I want to because I'm not overly invested of time, money, nor sentiment in the boat itself.

The peace of mind, on a professional level: I'm holding myself accountable for the part that I have played in creating the mess, the wasteland of forgotten dreams, by quite literally living with and in it.

The right thing, on an environmental level: The most environmentally friendly boat choice (at least as it relates to construction) is one that has already been built. I'm not making anything worse.

Clearly hermit crabbing is not for "all the people, all the time." But it's something to keep in mind when opportunity arises over some far horizon. It's a way to see some more of the world, accumulate inexpensive education or establish a base along any sea. The possibilities are endless.

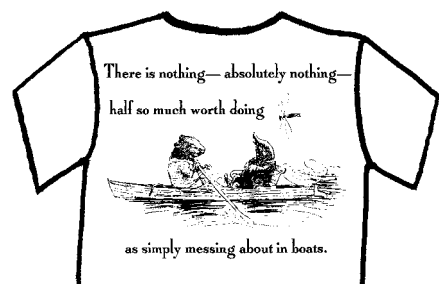
"The ideal is to feel at home anywhere, everywhere." (Geoff Dye)



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...like that rash that shows up on your rear end every August.

I had a brief discussion with Bob, our editor, about whether to go into a detailed explanation of why I winked out somewhat abruptly, and unseasonably early, after Chronicle #16. He thought not, my penchant for swanning on at great length being well established. As usual, I think he's right.

Let's say a series of small irritations, including a desultory run of late summer weather that kept *Ellie-Xander* at her float for five consecutive weekends and a couple of potentially more vexing problems sort of silenced the muse, even though there were stories to tell.

For example, we bought another boat, yes, boat number four. This one is a pretty lapstrake semi dory with a little tombstone transom. I haven't gotten around to measuring her yet, but I'm guessing she'll stretch the tape out to something like 17'-18'. She's been fiberglass clad on the outside, which must have increased her dry displacement by 30%, but she's a wooden boat. I'm so glad to have a wooden boat again. You'll be reading a lot about this one in future installments.

Also, when baby sister came up for her annual visit from Maine, she, my Kathy and I got to go for an all day cruise on an owner built Mackinaw Boat. Gorgeous day, beautiful cruising ground, fabulous lunch (courtesy of the skipper's Mrs.). We have photos. Chronicle #18, and maybe even 19, will be all about that. Turnabout being fair play, we got the Mackinaw Boat's skipper out for some bombing around the red buoy in the fiberglass sea sled. Might have a few things to say about that, too, compare and contrast being the most obvious.



We had an all day cruise on this owner built Mackinaw Boat.

Our waterfront, 40' ladder stairs to the "beach," canoe on its rack, bouldery foreshore with the tide out.



St Mary's Bay Chronicles #17

I'm back...

By Ernie Cassidy
New Edinburgh, Nova Scotia
upcloseconcerts@eastlink.ca



After the triumphal introduction, the canoe rowing rig didn't get much exercise. Same bad weather, disconcertingly rare convergence between a hospitable tide and time available to go a'rowing, kept that boat on its waterside rack for much of the season.

Dragging a 17' fiberglass Great Canadian canoe across 150' of wet, slippery, seaweed covered boulders loses its allure very quickly, however lovely it is once you're in the boat and prying it along.

I was surprised and, I must admit, a bit flattered, to receive a couple of inquiries from people who wanted plans for the drop in rowing rig. Plans!?! Ummm, at no point were there any plans. I replied with what I hoped was sufficient description to get anyone with the necessary woodworking skill to even think about duplicating this contraption off to a good start.

To my very great amazement, the canoe and waterside storage rack survived a November storm that, anywhere else, would have been called hurricane strength. After securing everything around the house in advance of this much heralded "weather event," I realized, too late, that I had completely forgotten about the canoe.

At the peak of the blow, and right about full high tide, I half walked half crawled over to the bluff and looked down over the edge. I expected to see either nothing, or a carpet of green fiberglass bits scattered the length of the beach. To my surprise, and relief, the boat

was there, safe, sound and looking way less perturbed by the wind than I. Amazed, I actually crawled down my stairway/ladder (see Chronicle #14) to the beach, 40' below (not the smartest thing I ever did). Once there, I realized that the wind, coming off the water, was piling up a cushion of dead air at the base of the bluff. The canoe wasn't even shaking on the stand. I could have slept peacefully under it.

Crawling back up to the top, the wind caught my hat and took it so far I couldn't see where it landed. Never have found the hat. Happily, it wasn't the \$80 Tilley that Kathy insisted I treat myself to for my birthday. Sounds like a lot of money for a hat (sure sounded like a lot to me), but I get a two year loss warranty with a Tilley hat, if I lose it, they'll provide me with a matching model at half price. I still have a year to go.

The project list this year has grown to daunting proportions. I'm making the list public to try and goad myself into getting to as many of the items on it as I possibly can. Alas, there are a lot of competing activities.

The Suzuki is out of storage and back on the road. My Kathy likes the Soozook better than the sailboat, most of the time, so the good weather has to be shared between the two. Of course, we can jump on the motor at a moment's notice and be gone for half an hour or half a day. The sailboat requires more planning and a consequent willingness to invest more time in the activity.

Also, I'm reconstituting my band, Generation Gap, this time as more of a collective of musicians rather than a "band" in the traditional sense. Hard to keep a band together, and motivated, when there are so few gigs, make that paying gigs, available. All kinds of places that used to provide live music for their patrons no longer have the budget to pay musicians to play, or so they say. So the new Generation Gap will be a flexible, changeable roster of people who know the repertoire well enough to show up on short notice when there is a gig. Next Tuesday it might be two of us. In three weeks, it might be four. Next time it will be just me, the guitar and the synth drums. Tailor the band to suit the budget on offer, since it rarely works the other way around any more (unless we're famous enough to pull in an audience).

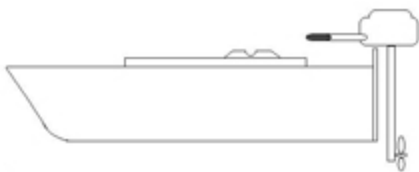
We will also see if we can get in on the small, but growing, in home concert phenomenon. This being a bit of a vanity item, and not a recurring expense, the purse strings tend to be a bit looser, or so I'm told. That's this year's music program. I'm trying not to dwell on the old saying, "We plan, God laughs."

The top boating priority this year is setting out a mooring out in front of the hacienda. I'm studying-up on a "scientific" three anchor mooring system, coupled with a traditional Maine fisherman's mooring pole used to keep working fishermen's boats stapled to the bottom in horribly exposed anchorages. I'm still trying to work out how heavy the individual anchors have to be and how to get the three anchors laid out in the scientifically ideal 120° pattern, while working from one small boat.

Might be better, I'm thinking, to try and hook up with a lobster fisherman who has GPS on board, hoping he doesn't inform me that this evolution will only cost me \$300 worth of diesel. If that worked out, the anchors could be scaled fit to keep a scallop dragger in place. No one's ever gotten into trouble by having a too secure mooring.

Assuming the mooring gets installed, the next project is to build myself a close to disposable tugboat/water taxi for as little money as possible. The mooring will have to be a least 100'-150' out from the extreme low water mark, which puts it a long way from the high tide line. The tug/taxi will be used to get from the water's edge, wherever it happens to be, to whatever is living on the mooring, whatever that happens to be. Like the members of Generation Gap, the occupants of the mooring will vary from time to time and could even be the canoe.

I have sketched out something that readers of *MAIB* will instantly recognize as a modified Bolger Box. It will look like what you'd end up with if a garvey mated with a painter's float. There will be oarlocks for my short oars and a bracket on which I can hang the 2.5hp Evinrude. The bottom will be made of something called "Puckboard." Hockey fans will know exactly what I'm talking about. It's a tough polymer sheet material that is used to line the side boards in hockey rinks. Kept well waxed, it should make a bottom fit to drag across crystal encrusted granite boulders, never mind the barnacle-encrusted basalt bowling balls I have to deal with.



This will be light enough to drag out to the water on the lowest tides. Once afloat, I think it might carry two people, if they're confident and well behaved, but it really only needs to be able to carry one. I'm hoping it won't leak like a sieve as I haven't quite sorted out what kind of goop to put between the Puckboard and the wood it will be fastened to, but no harm done if it weeps a bit.

This is a short haul boat. It should never be in the water, unattended, for more than a few hours and it will have flotation up the wazoo, hopefully enough to float the motor head clear of the water, though there should never be a reason to leave it on the mooring for more than a few minutes with the motor attached. I may even rig up a fixed on-centerline rudder so we can use her as a tender/lifeboat if we get a bit more adventurous

with *Ellie-Xander* this year. I still have fantasies of sailing her across the Bay to Sandy Cove, having dinner (and maybe spending the night) at The Olde Village Inn and sailing back home the following day. The harbor in Sandy Cove is as snug and safe as the one behind Cape Porpoise in Maine and just as tricky to get into under sail. However, once inside, it's much prettier and quieter.

This is part of the motivation for putting down a mooring here in New Edinburgh. The jump from Meteghan Wharf to Sandy Cove is a bit daunting in a 16' open sailboat. Yeah, yeah, I know about Ken and Margaret Dye. They were a bit nuts, or British, which amounts to much the same thing. New Edinburgh to Sandy Cove would be an easy trip, unless one were really foolish about the weather.

If we get all that together, the next big project will be fitting out the semi dory to sail and motor as well as row. Having spent two years with a "high-performance" sailboat, I'm ready to go back to a somewhat more casual and relaxed format. Something more like my old *Pamplermousse*.

I still have the rudder and sail from that boat, the later actually purchased for use in the *Pamplermousse's* larger successor, which never got built. Much of the sailing off the new mooring would be broad reaching back and forth along the shore, which is my favorite kind of sailing. Real blue water sailors have a mind set very different than my own. I like watching the bottom go by and spooking the basking seals off their chosen rocks.

If there's urgent business to windward, a shifting leeboard, on a simple rope lanyard, will get the job done. Any tight maneuvering will be done with the oars or the Evinrude. So we'll be rigging up mast partners, the leeboard and having brackets fabricated for the stern, one that can carry the rudder for sailing, another on which to hang a motor-bracket for the putt putt. The Evinrude is a standard shaft engine so it will need a custom made bracket to get the prop down into the water, the semi dory being rather cocked up in the way of the stern.

If that all turns out as well as I'm hoping, future projects (i.e., next year) may include a foredeck, a short afterdeck, perhaps some narrow waterways, a coaming all around and enough flotation to make taking an open boat across to Sandy Cove seem like a reasonable, rather than a madcap, adventure.

As soon as the basic rowing/sailing/motoring kit is all working acceptably well, *Ellie-Xander* goes up for sale. SALE, not sail. This is because I happened across some truly terrible, frightening news, not 5km from our house there is a garage with a 21' pocket cruiser that has been in storage and for sale for comin' onto ten years. I heard about this quite by accident, in a happenstance conversation with the owner, an elderly (even compared to me) widow. As I was listening to her enchanting stories about cruising all over St Mary's Bay and beyond with her late husband, I was reliving an old fantasy about having a boat that I could sail across to Sandy Cove, have dinner at The Olde Village Inn, sleep on the boat and sail back home the next day. I recklessly asked what her selling price was, desperately hoping she would say something like \$8,000 or \$10,000. That would have sent this fantasy back up to the attic, where it belongs.

Lard toonderin', doesn't she tell me she's "been trying to get \$4,000 for the boat and trailer, but hasn't received a single offer. But I would certainly like to sell it before it becomes an encumbrance to the estate." Now, I know I have to go see this boat, as soon as the weather milds up a bit (which it will have done by the time you are reading this). Our newly retired Commodore Comeau has offered to come have a look with me.

I'm hoping there were no offers (in ten years) because the inboard engine is a heap of loose scale and rust, the crank and pistons are chemically bonded to their mating surfaces, there's a fist sized hole just below the water line and several generations of field mice have been gnawing themselves cozy winter beds out of the sails. This would be my salvation, not to mention a great relief to Kathy. (Kathy, my indulgent spouse and proofreader, wishes me to add that the latter part of the previous statement is untrue.)

Somehow, I think it might not go that way. If I can get anything close to my asking-price for *Ellie-Xander*, and assuming I have better luck selling my boat than the widow has had selling hers, there could be another boat in our future.

At least, it would still be only the fourth boat.

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It's a boat... a backpack... a tent!

Report & Photos by Bob Hicks



When Jim Heter arrived at my place to pick me up for our tryout of his unique "Pak-Yak" folding kayak/backpack/tent, the two test boats were in the back of his station wagon, in their backpack mode. Really backpacks, complete with standard back pack harnesses, ready to be carried off down the trail. I had pondered a while over a suitable local location where we could try out the various permutations of Jim's creation, a body of water one has to walk into is not readily at hand in our heavily suburbanized area. But, Crane Pond in Groveland, about ten miles away, met most of the criteria. Its a sizeable pond in a state fish and game area, surrounded by woods and marshes and drained by the upper Parker River. There's a rough two-track jeep road into it, usually barred by a cable though.

We parked at roadside by the jeep road entrance, noting the absence of any cable. The 25 pound backpack hefted easily into place, and once settled onto my back it felt like it belonged. I'm not a backpacker, but Jim is, and he had adapted a standard backpack configuration to his creation. He hikes miles with his to remote waters in more wild parts of the country. The half-mile hike into Crane Pond was no strain, when we got there, illusion of hiking back "into the woods" was partly dispelled by a 4WD pickup that had been driven in by two young fishermen.

Jim proceeded to open up the packs after we laid them on the

ground. Two folded up sections opened out into bow and stern profiles viewed from above, still flat but obviously of boat shape. Then Jim reached inside the flat hulls and moved various internal structures into positions where they latched to give the hull its full three-dimensional form. In about five minutes we now had two ten foot fabric hulled kayaks. No pieces had to be fitted into the craft, all structural parts were already in place.

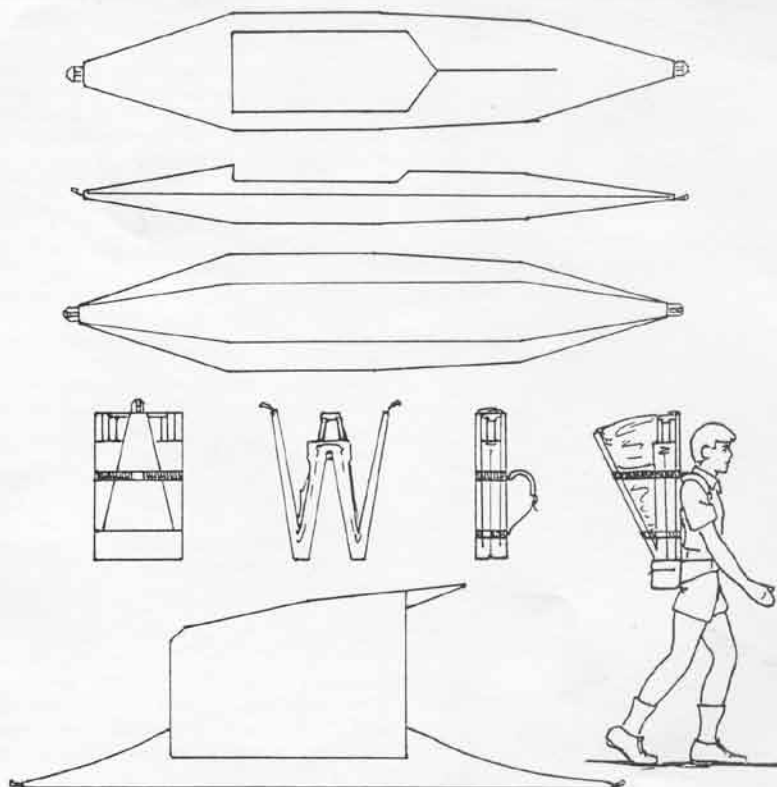
Final equipping with seat cushions (carried in the packs) and assembling the take-apart Sevlor inflatable double paddles (carried in the packs) readied us for the water. There was a mild breeze rippling the pond. I took some care shoving off to not drag the fabric hull on the gravel beach. This was accomplished by placing my hands, knuckles down, on the ground in the shallow water and lifting the boat along until it settled finally only onto water, no more bottom gravel.

My initial feeling was one of mild discomfort as I sat in the mid-point of the craft and cockpit as Jim suggested. No back support. I'm not comfortable without back support. So I turned back to shore to maneuver the other flotation cushion carried behind me into a good backrest position, and shifted my weight aft until I was comfortable. Much better. Only now the little craft was down at the stern. I'm 6' and weigh 175 pounds, Jim is 5'8" and weighs about 140 pounds, and

the trim of my boat now reflected my size and choice of seating position. But, this rearward bias of weight did not create a problem in paddling and I felt quite secure. The little boat was very stable.

We paddled around the pond and off down the Parker River for about a mile of its switchback turns in the large marsh bordering the pond. It was "Earth Day" Sunday and lo, here came into view a rather plump looking double kayak. Turned out to be an inflatable. The couple on board viewed our little craft, also portable, but the guy mentioned that his inflatable was "blown up for the season." They'd not be deflating it until fall, but would car top it. Later a canoe also came upstream, access from roadside on the upper Parker is about two miles downstream from Crane Pond. The folks were gathering trash, not a whole lot was out there, but the signs of last fall's duck shooting crowd were still around. For a fine early spring Sunday, though, we had a minimum of company.

About the time I began to feel my seat getting damp, Jim commented that my position allowed water to surge over the rear deck as I paddled along and some of this was now seeping through the water-repellent nylon decking where it had actually pooled in a sag in the deck. So be it, nothing to be done about it now, and the amount of water was on the order of dampness rather than wetness. Jim has a 12' version he created for bigger folks





to deal with this weight distribution situation.

The "Pak-Yak" was very maneuverable, stable and moved easily. The soft skin allowed one to feel the flexing of the bottom moving through the water, even through the closed-cell foam bottom inner liner. The little craft felt very much a part of its surroundings.

Back to the take out, and Jim showed me how to unzip the foredeck to allow stepping forward in the boat and then ashore without wetting my feet. Neat trick. We then moved on to the tent mode. Jim undid the internal latches and collapsed the frame back to its flattish shape. He then pulled the rear frame out of the skin, still connected to the rest of the frame, and locked it up into a vertical configuration over which he then slipped his custom fitted poncho, zipping it into place for full sitting headroom, with the cockpit spray skirt (which he fitted after our paddle) opening forming a ventilation window in the back. A sleeping bag fit nicely into the flattened hull, feet up under the still extended foredeck, and here was instant overnight shelter for the wilderness hiker/kayaker!



What a rig for the backwoodsman who wants to fish or just paddle the remote ponds and lakes or streams far from the nearest road. On his back it will carry his necessary gear folded up inside itself. On the water it will carry him where he wishes to go. And on the ground, it provides him overnight shelter at no added weight penalty. So who is Jim Heter and how and why did he ever come up with this unique craft? Here's the way he tells it:

"In the Oregon Cascades a little south of Mt. Hood, below the summit of Mt. Jefferson, is an area called Jefferson Park. About ten years ago I led a group of Boy Scouts on an overnight hike there. It's about an eight-mile hike up the mountain from the end of the access road. Jeff Park is a flat open area with a string of little mountain ponds and a great view of Jefferson and the neighboring peaks.

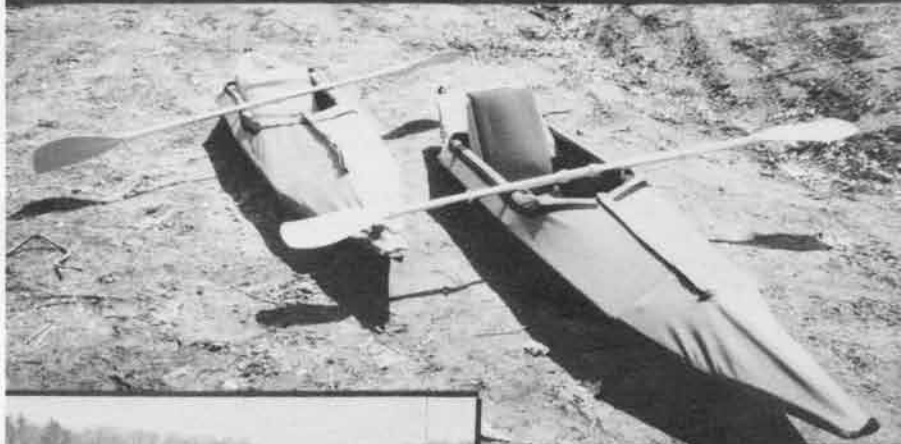
We were using homemade shelters out from plastic lumber tarps. I spent a good part of a cold night under one of them dreaming about what it would be like if I had my kayak with me (and a better tent). A year later, I made the same trip again. This time my pack was my "PakYak" and I fulfilled my dream of paddling around those high mountain ponds. My "PakYak" was also my tent, and I had no problem keeping warm and dry.

I built my first folding boat back in the '60's modelled (very roughly) after the original Klepper folding boats from Germany. That boat was 16' long and took me over an hour to assemble, because first I had to remember what attached to what, then I had to get the parts to cooperate. But, once set up it was great and I used it for several years.

Early in the '70's I came up with a new design to overcome the problems I had with the first one. This one was all one piece, and folded into four three-foot sections without disconnecting anything. I had a harness to carry it on my back, but it was still too heavy to think of lugging it too far. That one set up in about 15 minutes and I've had it everywhere from Cape Cod to San Francisco Bay. But not to Jefferson Park.

My latest "PakYak" 'is 10' long, weighs a little over 15 pounds empty, sets up in less than five minutes, packs all my hiking gear as well, and makes up into a one-man tent. I've made three more versions since that second Mt. Jefferson expedition. I've done eskimo rolls with it. I've had it in fast river water on the Nashua here near my home in Lancaster, Massachusetts, and through a two-foot chop on the ICW down in Florida. It survived the airline baggage handling too!

25 Years Ago in **MAIB**



I like this design so well that I believe others will too. So I've tried an ad in "Canoe" magazine and displayed it at a recent inventor's show in Boston. Here are the specs:

The "PakYak", backpack to kayak in less than five minutes.

Backpack is 30" high x 20" wide x 6" deep. With paddles, sprayskirt and USCG life preserver cushion it weighs under 25 pounds. As a pack it will carry all your hiking gear.

Kayak is 10' long by 24" wide by 12" deep and will perform on rivers, streams, ponds and lakes in all but the most extreme conditions. It will carry one adult up to 200 pounds, plus 50 pounds of gear evenly distributed fore and aft.

Tent is 10' long x 24" wide x 36" high and shelters an adult comfortably from adverse weather conditions.

Construction is waterproofed nylon canvas over a wood and metal frame, with closed-cell foam bottom liner for cushioning, flotation and puncture resistance. Frame is completely removable but in normal use folds inside the skin with no need for removal of any parts.

Now 25 Years Later

Jim still offers plans for this boat, go to:
robroy.dyndns.info/pakyak

Gettin' Ready for More

By Dan Rogers



Roughneck has been sitting in the driveway for about a week. Sure, we've been down to the lake for a couple short "sea trials." Didn't tip over or sink. But the "real plan" has been to "go someplace." Somehow I've let stuff intrude on that. Only yesterday I was gonna head out. But first, there was the small matter of a step stool that Kate had showed me in one of those yuppie lives in the woods magazine ads. For only something like \$250 she, too, could have this couple hunks of 6/4 cedar with two pieces of split fire wood for steps. What a deal, huh?

So just before leaving yesterday, I figured I could knock out a similar thing. I've been saving a chunk of my mother's cherry tree for something like this for most of the winter now. Shouldn't be such a big project.

Soooo, several hours later, I had something like this to show for my morning of non boating. As it turns out, that cherry tree was still really wet inside and will probably just split and twist itself into smaller sticks. But kinda pretty for the moment.



Then I was headed for the launch ramp but first Kate asked me to "check out the window in our bathroom." Well that was yesterday morning. To this minute I have no idea how that much water could accumulate in a window frame and start dripping gutter tainted muddy water out through a nail hole in a 2"x4" up someplace beyond my reach, even after pulling the trim boards from inside, the barge board flashing from outside, and completely making a mess of said bathroom.

I had been sort of planning to make that window over to match the spaulted pine countertop that I put in there, now years ago. Not exactly scheduled for yesterday morning, but I guess there's no time like the present. So there's also varnish drying on the pine pieces now awaiting a new career in a bathroom window surround.



Sooooooo. As long as the day was pretty much shot for launching boats, why not work on one? Little *Punkin' Seed* has been making pretty slow progress toward launch day herself this past week or two or three. In a paroxysm of catchupitis, she got the rest of a 50 yard paint job. The finishing touches on a rather complex and really heavy centerboard trunk, chain plate backers for new sloop rig conversion and an extended aft deck that still needs to be trimmed out. Maybe tonight.



Later. I THINK I've got *Punkin' Seed* ready, finally, last night for a test sail for the first time as a sloop and with a spiffy lazarette deck to sit on, facing forward. And a one of a kind removable centerboard trunk. And of course, the one of a kind mast tabernacle that allows for insertion of the mast without a pin and from the far end of the mast.



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Soooooo, I got *Roughneck* hooked up to Big Ole and tossed a few boxes of Top Ramen in with the Dinty Moore cans (tell me again why we need refrigeration, Johnny Mack?). A couple pair of dry socks and I was headed for Kettle Falls. It's about 100 miles to the north and I really needed to get up there to clear up some matters of importance to the July messabout/cruise called the Nor'Kopeli. Anyhow, off I went.



When I got out on the highway and put pedal to metal, we seemed to top out at about 40 knots, I don't think the entire total of eight spark plugs were actually causing explosions at every opportunity, but we seemed to be able to get up to about 50 knots on the downhill runs so I kept going.

We were still chugging and snorting when we got to Priest River, Idaho. They have a river in Priest River, one with a launch ramp. Yeah, like you probably guessed, the river's name is the Pend Oreille River. And heck, a launch ramp is a launch ramp. So we sputtered and coughed our way down the ramp and launched.

Cruise in *Roughneck*

By Dan Rogers



Right away I could tell events were gonna have a high level of consistency. Yep, I could say that *Roughneck's* main propulsion equipment was more than a little recalcitrant in making a lot of noise and smoke. I was offering my own suggestion of what smoke and noise was supposed to be like, but all the sailor language in the world wasn't gonna make up for the fact that the gas hose wasn't exactly hooked all the way onto the gas tank, exactly. So when I got that matter rectified, the damn thing still didn't want to start.

After long enough to know better, I decided that the old two stroke would clear his throat if we could get out away from the dock and run "full blast" for a while. So we went upriver for a few miles and anchored for lunch. And a nap. Of course.



As it got on towards dinner time I opted to return to civilization. The small matter of not knowing exactly where my sleeping bag was had little bearing on not staying out overnight. Well, maybe just a little.



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No, this isn't a spur of the moment, cocamamie, hairball scheme. No sirreeee. This is a well thought out, long term, cocamamie, hairball scheme. My plan for this keelboat is to perform a keelectomy, shorten the rudder and build an old timey lookin' cabin with my now trademark arched windows and lotsa wood trim. This one should out Lucas, Lucas. I'm thinkin' "magnum opus."

About six years ago I chanced to see this semi derelict 21' sloop stashed in a shed adjacent to amorphous piles of industrial, commercial, automotive, agricultural and recreational detritus. Her keel had been split wide open with a large accumulation of ice at some point in her past. She sported a number of docking scars of varying depth and quality of repair. Her bow pulpit had that telltale look of a catastrophic mast raising failure. But she had lines of a refined pedigree and a hard to describe quality that just simply grabbed my attention. And held it for all those years intervening.

At that first meeting I knew absolutely what I wanted to do with this hull, equal parts macabre and sublime. I could clearly see and feel her back in the water. But, for any number of reasons, things just didn't come together then or after several further discussions with the owner. Every now and again I'd stop and peer at her through the chain link fence. But there were other obligations. Other boats.



The Building of Surprise

By Dan Rogers

And yet, that sheerline was interesting, the underbody quite attractive.

Except my initial impression was quite antithetical to the original design brief. Because if I ever was to have her, her sailing days would be quite over. I was planning some rather radical surgery. And, hopefully, an equally rewarding transformation. There is no drawing, no written plan, no scientific research, no learned discussions. Just a mental image.

And, after all those years, all those other obligations, all those other boats, the transformation got a start today. The initial surgery was lengthy, incomplete, difficult and fraught with unknowns. But it was, for all intents, successful, if radical. This boat was designed to weigh 1,500lbs with exactly half hanging at the bottom of a 4' long fin keel. The deck sat over 10' from the pavement and the trailer was unbalanced and apparently built originally for a different vessel.



The procedure took all day. We had two tractors, two chain falls, several floor jacks and Big Jim, my new super duty engine crane, involved in the heavy lifting. Good buddy Jim showed up with his front end loader to help with some of the overhead work. And while I have visualized myself doing the work alone, it was a godsend to have him come and help. As I said, heavy stuff overhead, unbalanced, rusty, bent and did I say HEAVY? And somehow, by day's end, what I'll think of as my Magnum Opus is underway. Her name is to be *Surprise* and she will be the most beautiful "1910 Commuter Launch" in all of the realm.

Later... None of my creations have tipped over yet and they probably won't. But windage is still a big problem, especially trying to dock without embarrassing myself. This one, which will likely be a hermaphrodite between a Victorian steam launch and an Edwardian gentleman's launch, is gonna



have a sort of surrey top. Maybe a solid one with T&G showing on the underside. But this one is on a sailboat hull.

I already did the keelectomy, sort of like our former Olympian javelin thrower had done. But I saved the stump and will add a vestigial keel on aft. There's also a big rudder so maybe this time I can get back to the dock when I run out of Dinty Moore, even with all that planned sail area in the canopy.

One thing that I have discovered with the high hatted Frankenbot in a side wind is that it will follow the prop most anyplace. In reverse. But then, we storytellers already know a lot about backing away quietly, before anybody gets too mad.

From Dan

What a target Johnny Mack has offered up! He expects us to believe that a place as close to the North Pole as Vermont actually has hot days to be concerned about. Everybody knows that there ain't no such thing as a truly ideal heating, cooling or cooking appliance on a boat. Can't happen. Not propane, diesel, wood, coal, sterno, alcohol, AC, DC or buffalo chips will ever be really compatible with a bucket like ol' *Hildegard*.

From Johnny

I am very much interested in this project as last summer it broke into the mid 70s for a week or so and damned near killed me. You are right about not being a clear solution on a small boat, but I will immediately have to rule buffalo chips out, for no other reason than we don't have many buffalo around here, can I substitute cow chips instead as that we do have?

From Dave

I went through all these gyrations with the reefer in *Helen Marie* and finally bit the bullet and paid \$500 for a really fancy chest type cooler that's AC or DC. It's a real compressor type with an LED readout and can be set from 50° to -8°. On DC it draws 4 amps and on AC less than 1 amp. I have a 2kw Honda generator to run all of the other things, air conditioning is the big one, but for my new boat I'll probably just have an ice-maker and some fans so the super quiet 1kw will be fine.

The hardest part of that build was getting rid of the generator heat. After 23 tries and about that many holes cut all over the boat it ended up sitting on the fantail in a box. I know, this will blow John's budget all to hell and it's more fun to try to figure out other things, but when I was getting close to the end and wanted something extremely reliable, this is the way I went. We go out in *Helen Marie* every day and most evenings and it's hot as hell summers here in Florida so we usually end up running the generator with the windows open and the fans and AC blowing cool air on us. If we're out when it's really hot we close up but the cool breeze is usually enough.

I don't see the big deal where John is, just make a box that's open to the lake water and that'll keep every thing chilled down nicely. The water up there never gets above 40° does it?

From Johnny

I am leaning toward thermocouple units, just because it will be somewhat exposed to the elements and they are more cooler than fridge and thus more portable and easier to move around if needed. I am trying to find out if they will do the job or are just a gimmick. Maybe have a hybrid with ice and the cooler just keeps it longer, also may circulate the air inside them. Anything to be cooled with just ice has to contact the ice. I put bread on top on my last trip and it got moldy in one day! Of course it was sweltering, maybe like 82°-83°.

From Dan

I used to live aboard and sail on really cold salt water. Really cold during the week of summer, damn cold the rest of the time. I always figured that I could simply put a pump on a thru hull and pipe cold water through a small car radiator in the bottom of my ice-

The Hi Top Boys Discuss Refrigeration

Three of our contributors, Dan Rogers, Johnny Mack and Dave Lucas, are undertaking building themselves "Hi Top" small (18'-21') cruising outboards in which they can stand up under a roof and walk around and sprawl comfortably with cold beers from onboard refrigerators. They have struck up a three way online conversation about the issues involved and, along with the cabin height issue and potential related instability, arose that of refrigeration for keeping drinks (and food, too) cold on hot summer cruises. Johnny Mack from Vermont first raised the refrigeration issue for his 18' aluminum Hi Top abuilding (*Hildegard Reinheffer*) in the May issue (pages 36-37). Dan Rogers, who is undertaking a Hi Top conversion of a 21' keelboat (with keel removed) and Dave Lucas now well into his scratch built plywood Hi Top Fast Commuter, chimed right in after reading Johnny Mack's comments:



box. But on most of the boats I had in those days, the fiberglass ice box was really just hooked onto the hull and things stayed about 45° in there without any help from me. The heat exchanger on seawater is one brilliant scheme that I haven't gotten around to actually trying. Not yet, anyway.

From reader Connie Bennecke

Got your MAYDAY call from *MAIB* and will try and give you some help. Back about 1976 I designed and installed a refrigeration system in my 29' sailboat. My problem was that I wanted good refrigeration with a very limited engine running time. An electrical refrigeration system wouldn't work because of battery size limitations. My refrigeration system rapidly turned into two separate but interconnected problems:

I first had to have a well insulated icebox, or else I was just trying to cool the great outside. That doesn't work. The second problem is then the mechanical means for generating "coolth." I rebuilt the original, barely insulated, icebox using 3" of polyurethane closed cell insulation with stepped joints for less heat loss. This included all interior refrigerator surfaces. When that major job was completed, I could now work on the mechanical side of the system. This consisted of a York automobile air conditioning compressor that I bought at the junkyard for \$25.

I bought a holding plate filled with a eutectic solution (that now could be bought as a component without buying a whole system) to fit on the inside wall of the icebox. The refrigerant was compressed by the compressor, the high pressure refrigerant then passed through the expansion valve, lowering the

pressure which created the "coolth." The cold refrigerant then passed through the holding plate freezing it and making it a block of ice inside a stainless steel housing (normal S/S restaurant food containers are used by the manufacturer, who add the refrigerant coil on the inside, the eutectic solution and then weld a flat sheet of S/S to the pan edges to finish the plate).

The York compressor was belt driven from our Universal Atomic 4 engine. The remainder of the system consisted of an expansion valve and a filter. The system was filled with R-12 freon and I had to play with the amount of freon a few times to get the system working as I felt it should work. Thereafter, when we would arrive at the dock on a Friday evening, with everything at ambient temperature, we would fire up the engine and go down the Mystic River and over to Fishers Island where our group had a mooring. Operating time, about 45 minutes. At that time the holding plate was frozen solid, and the icebox temperature was about 40°. Running the engine about 15 minutes to get off the mooring and raise the sails, the next morning, froze the holding plate again. For the rest of the weekend we had ice cubes for our martinis while the rest of our sailing group were still lugging 25lb blocks of ice to their boats.

Since you have a powerboat, how much electricity does your running motor put out? Enough to run a 12 volt electric refrigeration system? If you are at a marina with electric power available, then you could go to a 120 volt AC refrigeration system. Your worry about 120 volts AC in an aluminum boat can be eliminated by installing a ground fault protector (and getting your electrical system installed or at least have your work checked by a marine electrician so that it meets safety requirements). A dorm room 120 volt refrigerator might do the job for you. You can't build a system as I did since you can't legally fill a system with refrigerant anymore. Now only licensed refrigerator repairmen can do it.

Another idea: If you use a dorm room refrigerator you can run it when at the dock, but when you are underway you don't have 120 volt power available to run the unit. What if you buy a small holding plate that would fit inside the refrigerator. You could freeze it at home in your freezer, take it to the boat and put it in the cold dorm refrigerator that has been plugged in all night. Now you have your cold block of ice to augment the cold refrigerator and that should hold you for a day's operation. At night, take the holding plate home and freeze it again.

On a cruise you should be able to find a nearby store that will let you put your holding plate in their freezer overnight and in the morning you are ready to go again.

From Johnny

I like your ideas. I do need to improve insulation and a ground fault device would be a small investment to prevent being slowly fried alive. I like the dorm refrigerator idea as favorite daughter's refrigerator has the summer off before returning to college. I believe the motor has a high output charging system but I will check the specs on that.

Here's to cold beverages wherever we are!

(To Be Continued)

Butthead Skiff

Last month's design was the pointy ended flat bottomed skiff, this month's is of similar construction but flat at both ends, hence the name Butthead Skiff. It has immense capacity for its length, making it a great work boat. Case in point is the Seaport's skiff *Skye*. In the photo Andy Strode is using it to untie the belly bands on the catboat *Breck Marshall*. Lots of initial stability which is valued when standing to reach to install nettings on the bowsprit of a schooner or offload a client into a moored Beetle Cat at the Livery.



Finding an historical photo of these ubiquitous little boats is almost impossible, unless they just happened to be in front of a big boat the photographer had his eye on. Exceptions are the bigger boats like the hay scows of the

John Gardner Chapter TSCA

www.TSCA.net/JohnGardner

San Francisco Bay, a replica of which, the *Alma*, leads an annual week long small craft incursion into the Delta. What a fine mother ship she makes with lots of deck space for those who choose not to sleep ashore.

Appearances can be deceiving, the forward transom can appear to our modern eye too large, too bulky and the bottom too flat. Closer inspection, however, shows lots of rocker on a well designed punt, good flare to the sides and nice curves to the sides. The transoms will just touch the water when loaded and underway. This makes a punt surprisingly easy to row. John Urban, a new Director in Development, wandered by the Seaport Boathouse on a sunny spring day last week. He had his eye on a long lean rowing boat but was talked into trying *Skye*, he came back with a big smile.

Plans of punts, when you can find them, vary all over the place. Some forward transoms, as in the New Jersey duck hunting scows, almost disappear. This is also true for Pete Culler's sailing Sampan designs, however, not on his Butthead Concordia Yard Boat of which *Skye* is an exam-

ple. Chapelle was a fan of the simple scow and suggested it for modern, low powered inshore fishing boats. His *American Small Sailing Craft* has many sets of plans, Figure 17 "Old Style of New Jersey Garvey" is an excellent example. John Gardner, in Chapter 12, Volume 2 of *Building Classic Small Craft* has two power boat designs, one inboard and one outboard. He attributes the first scow built to one Gervais Pharo, hence the "Garvey" name. Gardner's inboard garvey has a flat bottom all the way up to the bow transom. His outboard version develops a vee bow, a sub type we will explore on another day.

I will leave you with one elegant punt by John Atkin, the last in his book *Practical Small Boat Designs* that he named *Sedge* for the grass alongshore. It is partially decked, has a 1/2" cedar coaming which would look nice varnished and has a "lazyback" against which to lean while trolling for blues. It is fitted for oars or a low powered motor, a trolling motor and a 12 volt battery with an iPad sized solar collector on the foredeck would move it right along. And don't forget the two flag staffs, one forward for the TSCA Burgee and one at the stern, of course, for the American flag. Heed well his admonition, "Do not be tempted to pull the ends out, raise the sheer, snoop up the bow or stern ... just put the boat together as she is planned and see how well she performs."

Fair Winds, Mr Cleat

In a previous article honoring the builder, designer and waterman R.D. "Pete" Culler (1909-1978), I wrote about one of his skiff designs in use on the Mystic River:

"In 1996 friends and family of the late orthopedic surgeon, Dr Herbert S. Pasternak of Farmington, Connecticut, donated funds to Mystic Seaport in his honor to support the construction of a replica of the Butthead skiff *Kathy*. Dr Pasternak loved the sea and sailing and in October 1986 he took the boat building course from John Gardner intending to build a boat upon retirement. *Kathy*, well loved by many, was hauled at the end of the 1995 season. She was cleaned and painted, her ultimate destination the Rossie Mill and retirement from active service.

Seaport shipwright Tom Jannke and five Williams Mystic College students built a copy alongside *Kathy* in the Shipyard's main shop. At the launching November 2, 1996, she was christened *Skye*, a name shared by each sailboat Dr Pasternak owned over 20 years of sailing. At The Boathouse *Skye* fills in for *Kathy*, preserved as a record of Pete's construction methods" (*Ash Breeze* 1998 20 (1):6-11). *Skye's* provenance embodies the braided threads of our lives and her story is a reminder to at least one Boathouse volunteer, Dr Bob Martin of Essex, Connecticut, of his "old friend Herb Pasternak" with whom he shared for many years a professional work environment. For many local sailors her name evokes similar good memories.

For a such a little boat, *Skye* had a big role and reputation to fulfill. *Kathy*, registered at the first John Gardner Small Craft Workshop in 1970, was built for the Marine Historical Association by Capt Pete of Hyannis and the Concordia Co, of Padanaram, Massachusetts, and purchased for the Seaport by donor John R. Deupree. Referred to as the "Concordia Yard Butthead," she is only 10'8"x4'. A stable, ruggedly built cross-planked skiff with

Small Craft Notes from Sharon Brown The Butthead Skiff or Punt

Butthead Skiff or Punt (*Skye* '96)
10'8"x4'2" (Copy of Mystic Seaport
Museum Accessioned Watercraft 70.647
Kathy) Plans Available

high freeboard she worked the museum waterfront from her April 1970 debut.

One of her more unusual jobs was preserved in photographs published in Maynard Bray's *Mystic Seaport Museum Watercraft* (1979, p.99, Mystic Seaport Museum) and the 2001 edition *Mystic Seaport Watercraft*, with co authors Ben Fuller and Peter Vermilya (p.148, Mystic Seaport). In this 1972 job she was lowered through a hatch of the *Charles W. Morgan* to work the flooded hold. It's humbling now to note that her new sister *Skye* has been in service on the river from The Boathouse docks at Ames Landing for over 15 years!

A rather plain, stout looking boat, *Skye* is best appreciated upon rowing. "She is the



Taking a break from river excursions, the late Captain Granville A. Beals (1923-2013) relaxes at the oars in the Butthead skiff, *Skye*. —Sharon Brown Photograph

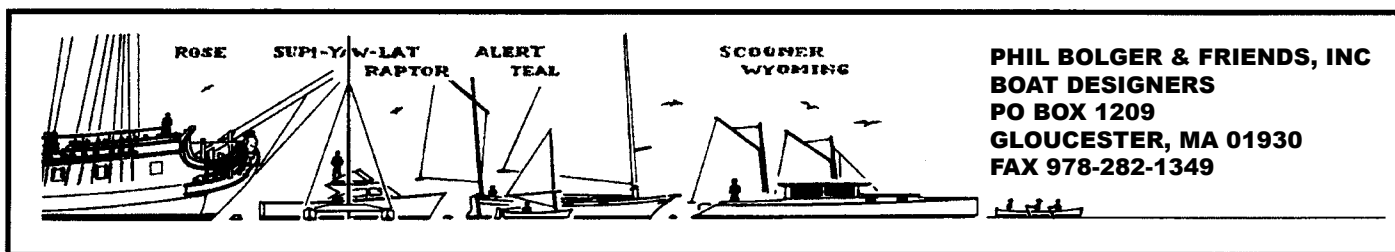
ideal tender for Beetle Cats. She is totally functional, very stable, turns readily and is a natural work platform. She draws little and is fun for bumping along the shoreline inspecting bottom life and birds. And on the return trip, you can lean into the oars and hear the hull pushing water and watch her wake. Or try an oar in her stern notch and scull. Children love her." (Brown loc.cit.)

Her 7' or 7 1/2' straight bladed spruce oars are easy to handle, especially while drawing alongside another vessel or the dock, when children might be challenged shipping the inboard oar and *Skye's* stability makes leaning to grasp a rail or toss the painter that much safer.

The Butthead Skiff is listed in John Burke's catalog of Culler's works (1984, *Pete Culler's Boats: The Complete Design Catalog*, International Marine Publishing Co., Camden, Maine) as "Hull #30, 10' work punt, Mystic Seaport, 1970 (p.295, plans p.78). Construction details given with the plans are sketchy. Culler recommended 3/8" cedar planking for the topsides, transoms of 1 1/8" pine, splined bottom cross planks of 9/16" to 1/2" pine, inside chine and skeg of oak, gunwhale of pine, thwart of 3/4" pine or cedar and seats of cedar. While two rowing stations are indicated, both *Kathy* and *Skye* have only one amidships and there are occasions when the trim would be much better if it was possible to row from the bow thwart or bench.

There is a lot to be learned about wooden boats and Pete Culler's philosophy of their use and care in John Burke's 2007 compilation, *Pete Culler on Wooden Boats* (published by International Marine with an introduction by Peter Vermilya). Over the years he was an inspiring presence underway in his home waters off Hyannis or at small craft workshops on the Cape and at Mystic, and his passing was much lamented among traditionalists.

Messing About in Boats, July 2015 – 47



Phil Bolger & Friends on Design

The Phil Bolger Light Schooner Racing and Cruising Fleet Project

I had planned to report on the launching of SACPAS-3. However... So it should at long last be in the next issue. I could list a lengthy litany as to the why nots and all. But I'll spare you.

Here is one way to get on the water anyway for purposes of keeping my promise (sort of), familiar to quite a few readers already. And at a fine scale for many amongst the readers of *MAIB*. This came up in local conversations over the last year or so to get folks to snap out of that depression around the fisheries and the resultant sell out mentality around our port zoning and shrinking infrastructure. The point is to add another scheme via such modest hulls and big fun towards rekindling the re emergence of a sense of local maritime pride, personal proprietary interests in our harbor and its surrounding waters, along with a progressively ambitious sense of "can

do" in plausible reflection of what has kept this a working waterfront across some 392 years. Some might have made shorter work of this, but I am glad to bring you this layout complete with line art and pretty and motivating pictures of these boats offering relaxed joy and on demand racing intrigue elsewhere already.

Between this family friendly, quite doable and reasonably affordable scope of a boat building project, and our efforts towards R&D into sustainable commercial fishing craft, an optimistic mind could conjure a more sustainable mindset on port economics as we are headed towards the 400th anniversary of Gloucester, Massachusetts. With, and then without, Phil's language in these pages, *MAIB* certainly has featured plenty of pages on the serious angles of this. And we have indeed reached quite far even into the military realm trying to bring resources to

Gloucester to boost the Port's fortunes piece by piece.

All the more reason to pursue such serious issues in principle, but in a much more gentle approach via this pleasant older design (1980 actually). So I quickly fell into envisioning first a local then regional fad/mania/fever/even schooner racing gambling scheme to grow, in a very mild unstrained reflection of the basic principles of self reliance by building your own boat, getting things done, introducing each other to matters of boating, wind, sea, doing interesting things on the water.

As part of the likely spectrum of interests, you can also see would be sea lawyers beginning to give in to their worst reflexes already, but I digress, as touched on in the article, one could have rigorous policy for such cases. Since Design #395 has none, keel hauling won't be an option. Rather, much worse is proposed!

'LIGHT SCHOONERS' in Mahone Bay, Canada



'LIGHT SCHOONERS' in Australia



Reconnecting Coastal Families, Neighborhoods, Clubs and Schools back to our Harbors and Boat-Building

“The Phil Bolger ‘Light Schooner’ Racing-&-Cruising Fleet Project”



- Schooners are very ‘Gloucester’, very ‘Cape Ann’, indeed very ‘New England’.
- These ‘Light Schooners’ by Gloucester’s own Philip C. Bolger (his Design #395) are affordable, buildable by its crews, very trailerable, can be made to go quite fast, and can be camp-cruised with some family and friends. 2015 (W.A.G) Cost ready-to-sail-on-trailer between \$4-6000.- - if home-built/club-built/neighborhood-built.
- All built alike to the same plans, without ‘Unobtainium’, Carbon-Nano trinkets, and other budget-busters.
- Instead, US-grown and -milled trees for spars, plywood, plus epoxy, fiberglass, paint along with locally-sown plain Dacron sails – all to keep her simple, buildable, repairable, affordable, and as local as possible.
- With several in just Gloucester, there could be Weekly Racing through the Inner and Outer Harbor.
- Every one of our 4 local Yacht-Clubs should have at least one, adding to the competition.
- Word will get around to Manchester, Beverly, Marblehead etc. all the way to Lynn and Newburyport.
- Thus is born the “North Shore Light Schooner League”.
- Each community that has one or some Light Schooners would host a race.
- While local crews would know their winds and waters best, sailing elsewhere balances things.
- A well-crafted Sailing-Schedule with ever moving locations would keep the optional racing competitive.
- Throughout the summer every Weekend could see these pretty nautical visions sail in company, if not race.
- While racing is inevitable, Repeat-Offending Obnoxious Kill-Joy ‘Sea-Lawyers’ would be ostracized into some soulless plastic boat without any romance, no heart, nor pride of builder-ship – to be a ‘nautical Pariah’.
- Several times a year a few or much of the fleet would cruise in company, overnight and over a week or more.
- ‘Light Schooners’ should be able to sleep one adult and two junior deck-hands under two boom-tents.

This is a proven design buildable by families, neighborhoods, clubs, schools. An opportunity to build something

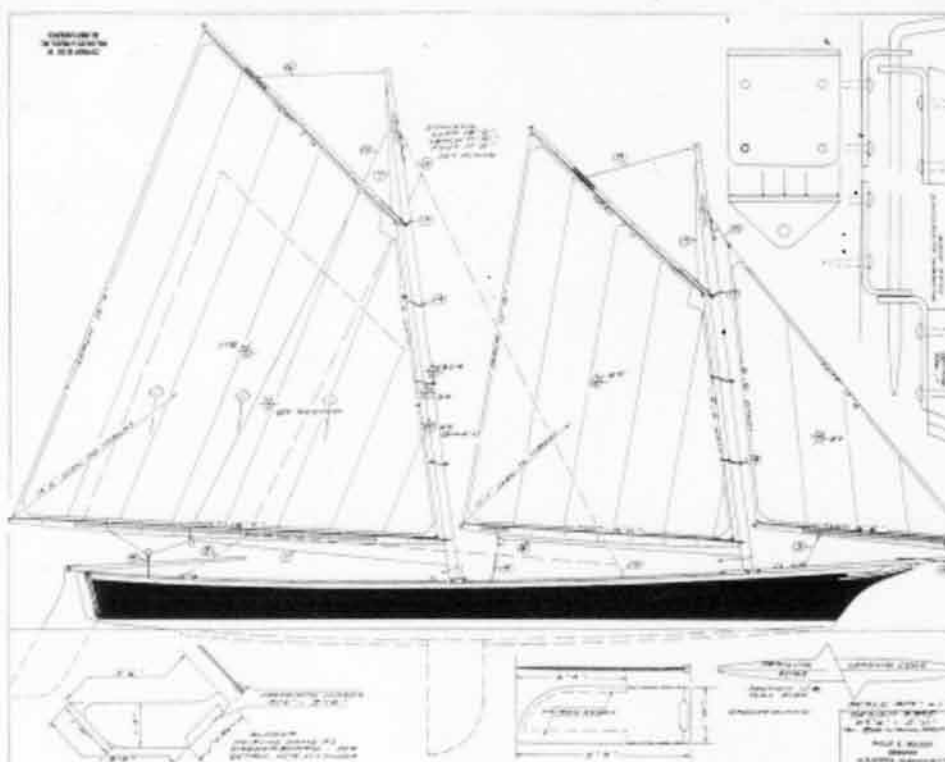
you can all use together, starting from a pile of materials to then launching, then sailing and finally cruising her.

Bolger's "LIGHT SCHOONER" Design #395

23'6" long
5'0" wide
204 sq. ft of sail
266 sq. ft w/staysail

oars
or
2-5HP OB

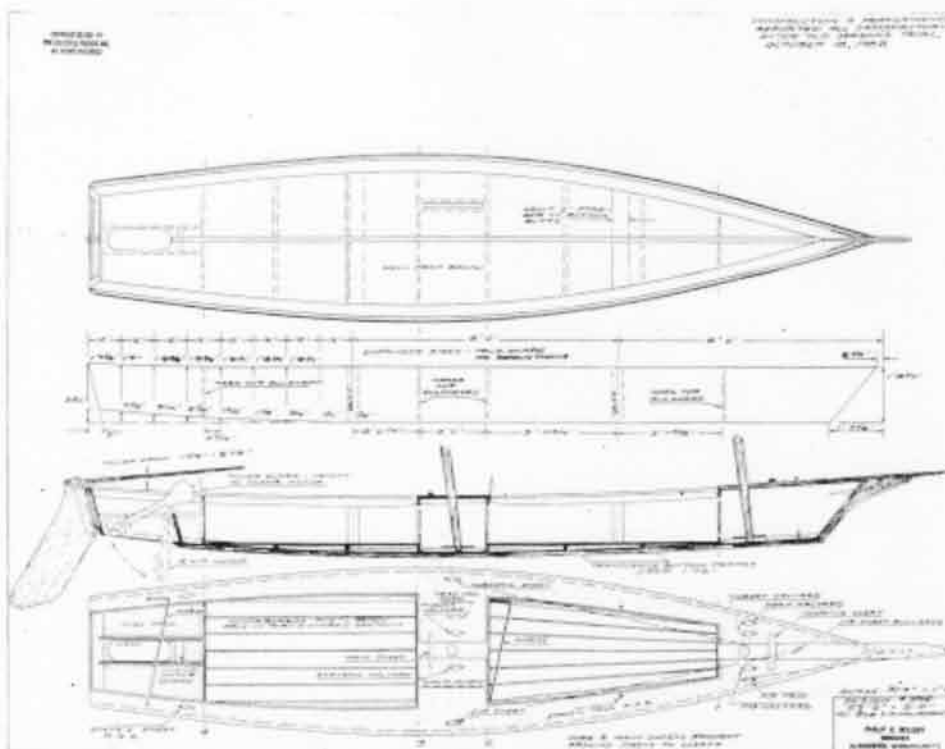
Under 1000lbs
= very trailerable



Interior and Structure

Simplicity
makes this
schooner
Doable &
Affordable

Mostly
Plywood plus
2xs for
details and
spars



Mk.2 version of her will see added a kick-up rudder, a centerboard instead of the dagger-board, a somewhat quieter bow, at least two pairs of oar-locks for rowing her, and more amenities supporting staying aboard her overnight for routine overnight stays and camp-cruising under boom-tents with all provisions, galley and head ergonomically located and securely stowed aboard as a matter of course.

Go look up what the word 'Schooner' actually means ! And why the rig is so handy !
And study up on who Phil Bolger was...

Early private “power boats” were steam-powered yachts with professional, paid captains and paid crews (including the engineer and his assistant). Among the crew would be the skill sets needed to keep the vessel operational unless there was a major breakdown of some sort. Most of us today do not have any of the above assistance on board and the days of a spare set of spark plugs and some sheer pins are long gone. Now we call upon those with the necessary skills to keep our boat running, when such help is needed.

One area where the required technical skill may be hard to find is with the infusion of new electronics onboard. Looking at all the electronic devices being offered to those who go upon the water in a boat, I see the need for on call electronics technicians much like the job I had at one time keeping computers (and their software) operating. However, rather than working in an air conditioned office, I visualize our technicians operating from a fast boat as they go from problem to problem, because most such problems will be on the water (and probably miles from a marina).

The hardware may be straightforward, but the software that makes the device work is another matter. If using any of the variety of electronic charts now available, we are dependent on the software and the chart data files for effective use of the device. Unfortunately, as a number of printed accounts note, sometimes the software (or the data files) have problems.

One neighbor at Shell Point has a hand held device with the local charts available. The device also has a GPS receiver, so the operator can see where the GPS location is shown on the chart. Every so often the operator has to spend the money to upgrade the electronic chart. And, because of software requirements, sometimes one can only download charts from one source and only on one type of memory card. For a review of various data downloading options, find a copy of the May 2015 issue of *Practical Sailor* and read the article on “Digital Media Storage” starting on page 17.

The newer electronic chart devices are not as restricted as to their source of chart data files, but the time has to be taken to download the revised chart data. However, given the



rather low cost of the hand held chart display devices, an alternative action is to recycle the old device and purchase a new one with all the latest upgrades of the hardware and software readily available. It is an option.

Both power and sail boats can require team work to get some things accomplished in a timely and safe manner. My wife and I worked out hand signals for use when we were deploying or retrieving the anchor. She ran the boat and I dealt with the anchor, chain and rode. Our system worked quite nicely. Likewise, leaving and returning to the float required coordination to make sure the lines were where they were supposed to be.

When I was still involved in racing a Ranger 26 in the local MORC races, we had four people on the boat minimum (maybe a couple of more people if the wind was going to be on the high side or the race was more than three to four hours in duration). Each of us had an assigned role for each activity and we practiced to make sure the basics worked. Of course, in the middle of a sail change some item would “hang” and on the fly adjustments had to be accomplished, but practice and knowing what the others were doing made the difference.

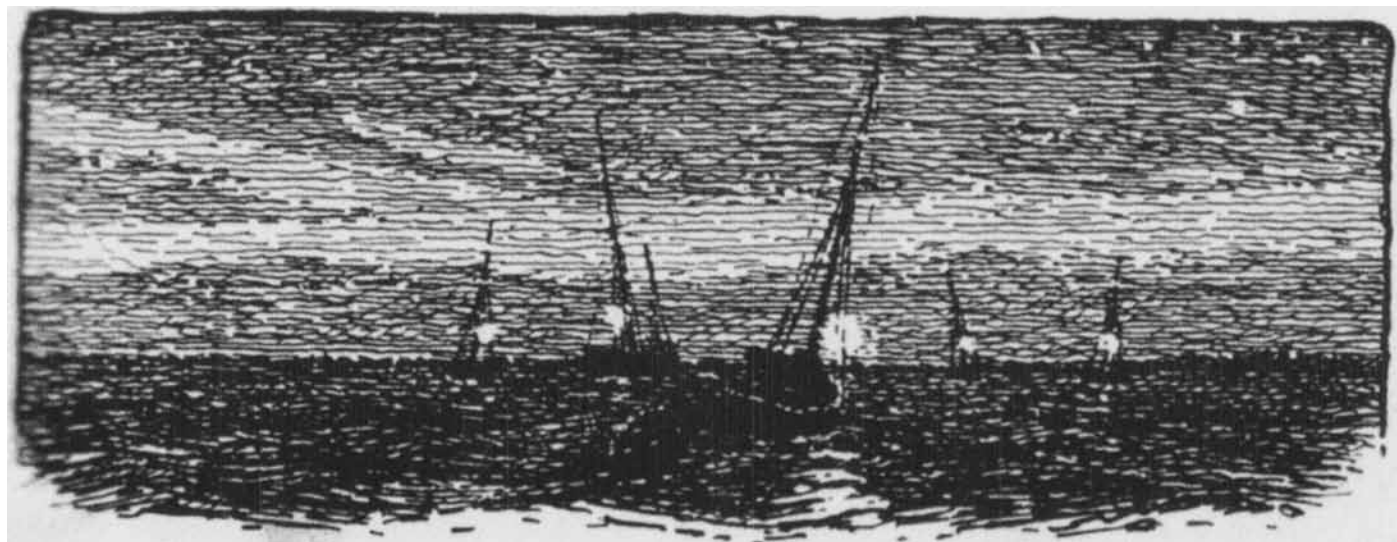
For those readers who sail and use a spinnaker, can you let the spinnaker go and turn the boat to pick up someone overboard in a controlled manner? Have you tried in light air? One factor that allows such an operation is to have the spinnaker sheet/guy as one line with each end secured to a shackle that attaches to the spinnaker. The line is long enough to run through the spinnaker pole and back down the lee side of the boat to the lee spinnaker winch. This arrangement takes care of a line “flying” to windward if something gets loose.

Such an approach also allows pulling in the spinnaker on the leeward side without anyone going forward to release the shackle on the guy. If the spinnaker halyard comes back to the cockpit, one person can douse the chute from the cockpit, if necessary. If someone goes overboard and the guy has to be released in a hurry, it is nice to know that control can be regained when necessary, assuming there are enough people on the boat to keep an eye on the person in the water, release the spinnaker halyard, pull in the spinnaker and steer the boat.

One of the problems with boating is that when something goes wrong and the skipper is injured or otherwise incapacitated, others on board may not know what to do or where necessary items are located. Those who have thought about this usually have a short speech before the boat leaves the float about how to start the engine, work the radio, and where the fire extinguisher, PFDs and first aid kit is located.

Along these lines, members of the Apalachee Bay Yacht Club have decided to work on training all those who go out on a boat on the basics of boat handling so they can bring the boat back if something happens to the skipper. One of the approaches being considered is a course called “Partner in Command” that is available as an online course at www.BoatUS.org/courses/ along with a number of other specialized courses. To access these courses, one has to be registered with the organization to log on. A copy of the student’s manual can be obtained by members of the US Power Squadrons through the Ship’s Store (put “partners in command” in the upper right Search option). The Power Squadron approach is an “Instructor’s Manual” on a CD and information booklets for the students that goes with the PowerPoint presentation on the CD.

The BoatUS approach is for individual learning online. The Power Squadrons approach is as a group seminar, although one can review the material as an individual at home. What is also needed is on the water instruction so the student can not only see but can also “feel” the material being presented. Doing is often the best way to learn a needed skill.



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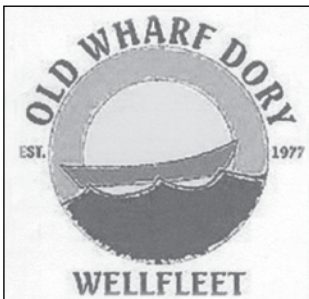
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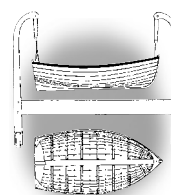
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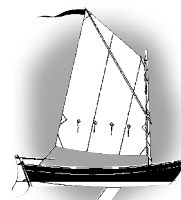
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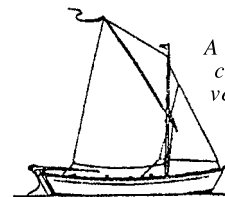


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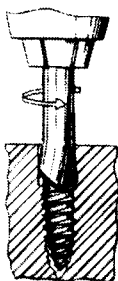
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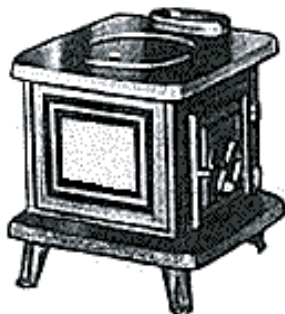
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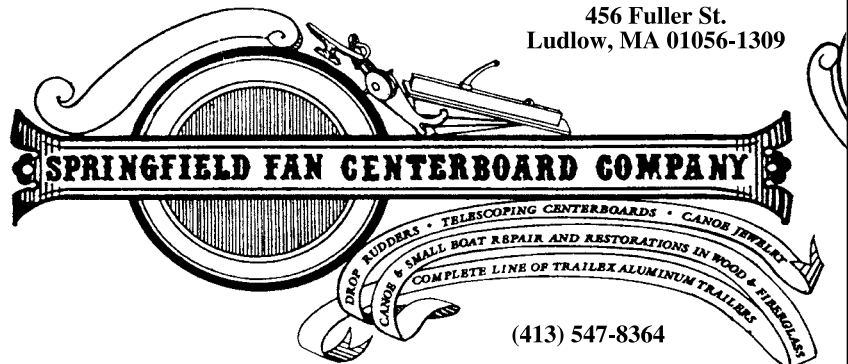
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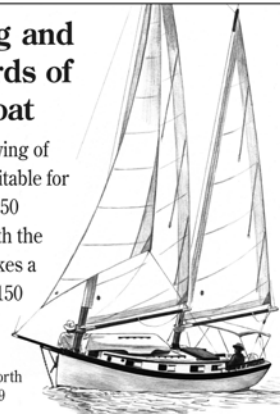


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GREG GRUNDTISCH, Lancaster, NY (Buffalo area), (716) 681-1315 (8)



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Mail to Boats, 29 Burley St, Wenham, MA 01984, or e-mail to maib.office@gmail.com. No telephone ads please.



22' Herreshoff Eagle Sloop, in Bohemia Creek, Chesapeake Bay, seeking a one-third partner. Built in RI in '74, w/cabin with 2 bunks, stove, portable toilet, fine for short voyages throughout the Bay. New sails '14. Looking for competent sailor willing to share annual work days, share the annual costs of docking and winter storage, estimated at \$1,500/yr.
DENNIS BRUNN, dbrunn@verizon.net, (609) 529-8838. (8)



Flying Fifteen, by Uffa Fox, glass hull, needs deck. \$200.
(860) 536-3325. (8)



11' Rowboat, designed & built by Ed McClave ca '80. Cedar on oak. W/oars. \$1,750.
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18'6" Midland, '75, glass, 25hp Mariner. \$1,500.
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19' Sailing Dory, glued lapstrake '84, sprit yawl, tanbark sails. Needs some varnish, daggerboard trunk repair. Has oars & cover, no trlr. \$1,000 OBO. **7'8" Oughtred Mouse**, rowing version. No stern seat, gray & white, ready to go. \$500 OBO. JOHN SANDUSKY, Rocky Point Long Island NY. johnsandusky@hotmail.com (8)

18' Marshall Sanderling Catboat, boat, motor, trailer, etc. (upgrades). Asking \$7,900.
EDWARD BURR, Groton, CT, (860) 405-0722. (8)



'01 12'4" Compass Classic Rainbow, Karin Elizabeth. FG replica of classic wooden catboat. Loadrite galv trlr w/spare wheel & tire. North Sails sail, Danforth anchor, pump, jiffy reefing. All in gd cond. Boat sailed only in fresh water on Mousam Lake, ME, winters in garage. \$4,000.
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Bolger Bantam, launched in '06. Lengthened to 22'. 25hp Yamaha HT. Aluminum single-axle trlr. Featured in *MAIB* series in '07 and Duckworks in Jan '08, "A Winter in Florida". \$8,000. BOB, (218) 343-5887, otter55806@yahoo.com (7)

Blackwatch #52, FG, 24' LOA, 18.5'x7.5'x 2' draft, fixed long keel, built by Blue Water Boats in Amarillo, TX in '80. White hull, no damage. Brite mahogany trim, interior, bowsprit & companion-way drop boards. Sails & rigging gd. LED lites for int., nav & anchoring. '14 Tohatsu, 6hp, 4-stroke, Sailpro model. New claw anchor w/chain & nylon rode on bow mount. Gd ablative bottom paint. Tiller steering, also has sst. wheel steering pedestal (Edson type) that new owner may install if desired. Galv trlr is exc w/new bearings, LED running lites, good tires, ready to go. Clear title. Asking \$8000 MIKE HOWSLEY, DeRidder, LA, (337) 462-9384, mhows@ymail.com (7)

Original Bart Hawthaway "Rob Roy" Canoe, 10'3"x29", 21"x48" cockpit. Single blade paddle & modest sail rig. \$1,200. RICHARD JOHNSON, Newbury MA, (978) 462-8414. (7)

'75 Marshall Sanderling, 5hp Johnson o/b, 2 sails, sail cover, cockpit cushions, Harken blocks, other equipment. In gd cond, located Bay Head, NJ. BOB REDDINGTON, Bay Head, NJ, (732) 814-1737 (C), (732) 295-1590 (H). (7)

Menger Oysterman 23 Skipjack Ketch, w/trlr, sails, Main, Jib, Mizzen. Older Johnson 9.9 o/b All spars & standing rigging. Running rigging needs replaced. Needs cosmetics & some minor work. \$4,500 OBO. BOB, Hollywood, MD, (301) 373-4988 (7)

15' Montgomery, dark blue, tanbark sails w/ newish 6hp Mercury 4-stroke on custom fitted trlr. \$5,850. Located in southwest VA. email for photos and more inf. McCABE COOLIDGE, mccabecoolidge@swva (7)

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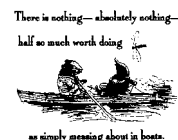
Geodesic Airlite Dinghy, Model "Ebenezer". 11'3"x40". Whitehall style, constructed w/heat shrink Dacron/Kevlar covering w/second layer of blue model airplane clear fabric. Weighs 28lbs, capacity 350lbs. Incl oars & oarlocks. Vy gd cond. Asking \$350.

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In today's episode, I called Justin to ask him if he had anything for the Messing About ad. He said, "Nope. Nothing. Just banging out boats." Later that day I stopped in at the shop and saw the latest issue of OCEAN HOME: THE BEST OF THE BEST sitting there. Open to the inside of the back cover and what do we find? Well, on the left hand side is one of our cedar guideboats. On the right side is an Italian yacht. 40 to 70 feet. Looks quite lovely. As do the women featured in several of the photos. In the main photo, with the boat up at speed, there are two women. Only one man. The spare woman is seen reclining on the back deck.

The funny thing with this.... Italian models posed for the photos, collected their fee, maybe had a glass of champagne, shot down 43 invitations from the 6 men involved with the shoot...and toddled on with their lives.

The woman in the guideboat....wait, you don't see a woman in the guideboat? Hmmmm. Well, she's central to the story. In fact, the gentleman who bought the boat, \$16k, thank you, said that he was buying the boat for just one purpose. He was buying it as the craft in which he wanted to propose to fair damsel. Did it work? Did she say yes? Well...we happen to know that this gentleman could have bought 100 of the Italian luxury yachts...he could have bought 10,000 of them without even bothering to call his broker....but THIS was the boat in which he wanted to propose to his now wife.

Send an e-mail and we'll send a big color version of these pages from OceanHome. Their text is quite excellent... but it only has to do with how wonderful and seaworthy our boats are. It has nothing to do with the wedding proposal....they don't even know that story....this was just a pretty picture they picked from our endless collection of customer photos. The first words of their text: "If your idea of a perfect summer has to do with messing about in boats...." We had absolutely nothing to do with that phrasing, it's just what the lady wrote.